U23s v Wolfsburg | Liverpool Ladies | Anfield update | LFC official goodies | Win a Klopp book

LIVERPOOL FC

Official Liverpool FC Monthly Magazine

liverpoolfc.com

GREAT LFC GOALS OF THE MONTH

GET ON THE NEW STADIUM TOUR!

15 Premier League stats about the Reds you never knew!

POETRY RUSH & DALGLISH IN MOTION

EXCLUSIVE

How **Kevin Stewart** found his midfield mojo and why **Lucas** has joined the Anfield elite

DUDEK & BISCAN ON LFCTV

LFC Mag Nov 2016 £4.25
ISSUE 051
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WHO'S THE MANÉ

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Contents

Issue 51 November 2016



With Halloween on the horizon and Bonfire Night not far behind, we've filled this latest issue of the club's official magazine with plenty of Liverpool FC fireworks...

LIVERPOOL

A lively front section exploring the wider LFC world and keeping fans up-to-date with what's happening and what's about to.

FOOTBALL

The stuff that happens on the pitch: exclusive interviews with current Reds stars, the stats that matter plus a few blasts from the past.

CLUB

How the club reaches out to communities at home and abroad, plus stadium news, fab official merchandise, and fan representatives.

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YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE LIVERPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB EST·1892



WHAT. A. GOAL.
It's the moment Jordan Henderson scored one of the goals of the 2016/17 season – already – in Liverpool's 2-1 win over Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. We could all see what that stunning strike meant to the Reds skipper.


YOKOHAMA TYRES
Standard Chartered



PITCH PERFECT

A new view from the expanded Main Stand shows Anfield rising as one to applaud Sadio Mane's goal against Hull City, and all ten outfield players celebrating the strike which made it 3-0 before half-time. The Reds added two more in a comprehensive victory over the Premier League newcomers.



INTRO

A momentous occasion at St George's Hall, visions for the Anfield area and some of the best Instagram posts from Reds

Along with 96 Avenue what is the name of the other new public realm created outside Anfield's expanded Main Stand? Answer on p98.

HALL FOR HEROES

The city bestows its highest honour on the 96 and Hillsborough campaigners at a magnificent venue

The 96 people who lost their lives at Hillsborough have been awarded the Freedom of the City of Liverpool. St George's Hall was the venue for the presentation, with campaigners Professor Phil Scraton and Kenny and Marina Dalglish also recognised.

The ceremony saw the families of those who died receive a specially-designed scroll and a medal inscribed with the name of their loved one. Mayor of Liverpool Joe Anderson said: "When we announced that we intended to give the 96 and the key campaigners Freedom of the City, we received an overwhelming reaction from people who were proud that Liverpool was acknowledging these individuals in this special way.

"The Hillsborough campaign was a long, heartbreaking journey for all involved… I hope this tribute will show the families and friends of the 96 that this city will never forget them, and that we thank those individuals who played a pivotal role in the 27-year campaign."

Professor Scraton, whose research into the tragedy helped to reveal



L-R: Trevor Hicks, Margaret Aspinall, Kenny Dalglish, Lord Mayor Roz Gladden, Marina Dalglish, Consort Roy Gladden and Phil Scraton

the truth, described the award as a bittersweet experience: "We should not be here, those people should never have died, so I cannot help but think that the most important part is the commemoration of those who died. But at the same time it is also a celebration of ordinary people who can pick up the mantle and fight for justice, and that they can win. To me that is a tremendous indication to other families in other situations to never give up."

Dalglish was manager of Liverpool FC on that afternoon in Sheffield in 1989 and played a major part in comforting the families in the immediate aftermath before also backing their long battle for justice.







LIVERPOOL

JUSTICE

TRUTH

Freedom of Entry

into the

City of Liverpool

At an Extraordinary Meeting of the City Council of the City of Liverpool held on Wednesday, 25th May 2016 within the Town Hall, in the presence of The Right Worshipful, The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Tony Concepcion and a full Council, it was moved by the Mayor of Liverpool, Mr Joe Anderson OBE and seconded by the Deputy Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Ann O'Byrne and resolved unanimously that:

In pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Honorary Freedom of the City of Liverpool be conferred upon

Kenneth Mathieson Dalglish MBE

In recognition of his unstinting support given to the Hillsborough families over 27 years and his substantial charitable work.

MAYOR OF LIVERPOOL

LORD MAYOR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE





Kenny said he was "very, very humbled" by the honour. "All we did is we went out, played football and won a few trophies. When Hillsborough came along we only did to the families of Hillsborough what they did for us and that was support us.

"It is normal for people to help each other in their moment of need. If somebody wishes to reward you then that is their choice. We did it because it was the right thing to do. Myself, the players, everybody involved at the football club, it was our responsibility to turn supporter and help them through the darkest days they had.

"The families can be very proud of themselves at what they have achieved, the sacrifices they have had to make to get here. They are the real heroes. We only lent them a hand."

Meanwhile a medical centre in the city's West Derby district has been dedicated to the 96. It was opened by Margaret Aspinall, chair of the Hillsborough Family Support Group.

A VISION FOR ANFIELD

What next for the city district that's home to Liverpool Football Club's world-famous stadium?

As reported in the previous issue of the magazine, plans have been submitted to continue the regeneration of the broader Anfield area. The proposals were exhibited at the Isla Gladstone Conservatory in Stanley Park in early September, with local residents able to give their views, and the work would become the latest phase in a £260m plan led jointly by the City Council, Your Housing Group and Liverpool FC.

At the official opening of the expanded Main Stand in September, the club's chief executive Ian Ayre paid tribute to "our friends from Liverpool City Council and Your Housing Group, who were such an important part of this project and importantly the wider project we have been involved in, which is the regeneration of the local area."

He added: "The engagement and relationship with the residents throughout this process has been a really key part of this. We are the biggest neighbour with the biggest house in this area, but we have fantastic neighbours ourselves."

Here's what some key figures from those project partners have to say…













	 **ANN O'BYRNE** DEPUTY MAYOR OF LIVERPOOL	 **MARK TATTERSALL** CHAIR OF YOUR HOUSING GROUP (recently succeeding the outgoing Kathy Cowell)	 **STEVE ROTHERAM** MP FOR LIVERPOOL WALTON
What do you think of the new-look stadium?	When I first saw it with my own eyes I was gobsmacked. The design is so seamless with the rest of the stadium – it's a perfect fit. That said, I think the real coup for the club and the Anfield community is how the stand knits into the fabric of Stanley Park and the neighbouring residential community. That tree-lined approach up 96 Avenue is so elegant and classy – it has brought that beautiful great green lung right to the door of the stadium. It reminds me of the way LiverpoolONE reconnected the Albert Dock to the city-centre.	The stadium and its wider public realm benefits not only the football club but the wider community of Anfield, creating a beautiful environment which links through to Stanley Park. It's involved many partners and the local community all working together to ensure the vision for Anfield became the reality of today, and it's great to be a part of shaping the future of Anfield.	I don't think anyone could argue that it isn't an impressive structure. Throughout the construction period, excitement was building among fans as this enormous structure grew, with the roof truss visible across the whole Liverpool City Region. I toured the stand before the first home game and would say that the facilities are right up there with the very best in world football – and the acoustics have enhanced the atmosphere at the ground.
How important is the stadium expansion to the broader vision for the Anfield area?	It's fundamental, one of the key components to the Anfield Vision which the Council, LFC and Your Housing Group launched three years ago. Alongside the housing regeneration, improvements to Stanley Park and a new modern high street, the stadium provides a very impressive centrepiece for the community and needed to be celebrated as such. In addition to the many job opportunities that the stadium expansion has created, its long-term commitment to Anfield will act as a catalyst for further investment, repositioning this as a great place to live, work and visit.	It's come at a booming time for Anfield. Over the past five years the wider community has seen some dramatic changes. The introduction of new-build properties and regeneration of older ones, bringing them back into use, has injected the area with an excitement which hasn't been seen for a long time. Working closely with community groups across Anfield has ensured that their aspirations for the area have been incorporated into the wider vision. Our work in partnership with both LFC and Liverpool City Council has been pivotal to driving the further regeneration of Anfield forward.	I'm proud to be the only Member of Parliament in the country to have two Premier League clubs in my constituency, and both play a major part in visitor numbers. I believe LFC is vital to the future regeneration of the Anfield area and the north of our city. Liverpool FC is a global institution. Wherever you go abroad people have heard about our city and much of that is due to our football and music legacy. Visiting fans often talk about the generosity and warmth of Scousers and much of that goodwill is generated from the Anfield welcome.
What's the next step for this part of the city of Liverpool?	In the immediate vicinity there are proposals for a new hotel. But for those living in Anfield the hundreds of new and refurbished quality homes are perhaps the greatest result. Progress has been fantastic and we are working hard to bring forward new plans for Walton Breck Road which will be getting a revamp to improve the quality and mix of the local shopping and visitor-destination offer. Together with the completion of the restoration of Stanley Park, it will benefit the community for decades to come.	We have just completed a widespread community consultation on the proposed vision for the new High Street and Walton Breck Road – designs which put the emphasis on the High Street being at the heart of the community. Using the stadium as a backdrop to the plans has enabled the wider community to benefit, with initial feedback from the consultations indicating positivity. It marks another milestone in the regeneration of Anfield.	Liverpool's cultural, music and sporting heritage is known throughout the world and the improved stadium is an attraction to our city in its own right. The new development will also help businesses grow and in turn boost our local economy. The whole city region needs economic growth to improve the life-chances of our people. I hope the expansion gives the local community something to be excited about after years of austerity.


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IN WITH THE NEW

Supporters in the new-look Main Stand at Anfield were given two early treats, witnessing a 4-1 win v Leicester followed by a 5-1 victory over Hull.

REDS ON INSTAGRAM

Brothers sharing a selfie and Carra giving the Nevs some clog





@luchogarcia14
The amazing boardroom at Anfield. Bob Paisley and King Kenny two of the hosts #Legends #LFC #Anfield



@liverpoolfc
A fantastic shot of the new Main Stand by @peterhughesphotography! Show us how you #LoveLFC



@danielagger22
Nice day today 😎



@dejanlovren06
Mittagessen mit meinem bruder [Lunch with my brother] @ec2323 #ynwa





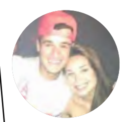
@stevengerrard
Hendo 🙈 stop it... 👏👏👏 come on you Redmen ❤️





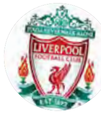
@amplfc18
Muy contento 😄😄 Por fin tengo mi @robstepx1 Gracias por todo !! 🚲





@phil.coutinho
Hermanos 🇧🇷 🇪🇸 👊 😜





@liverpoolfc
Brilliant support, Reds! 👏 Show us your matchday pics using #LoveLFC! #LFC



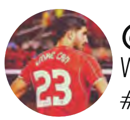




@kevstewart93
23 Years Thanks for all the messages & support #Trowwback #SurfaceAintQuiteAnfield #DadsLawnMowerBroke



@23_carra
Saw off the other Neville after a few years this'll take a few hours! #mnf



@ec2323
Walking around in Liverpool 😊 #ynwa #Liverpool #EC23



@jerzydudek1
We did it !! Race Marathon finish 5 in class, 43 overall !





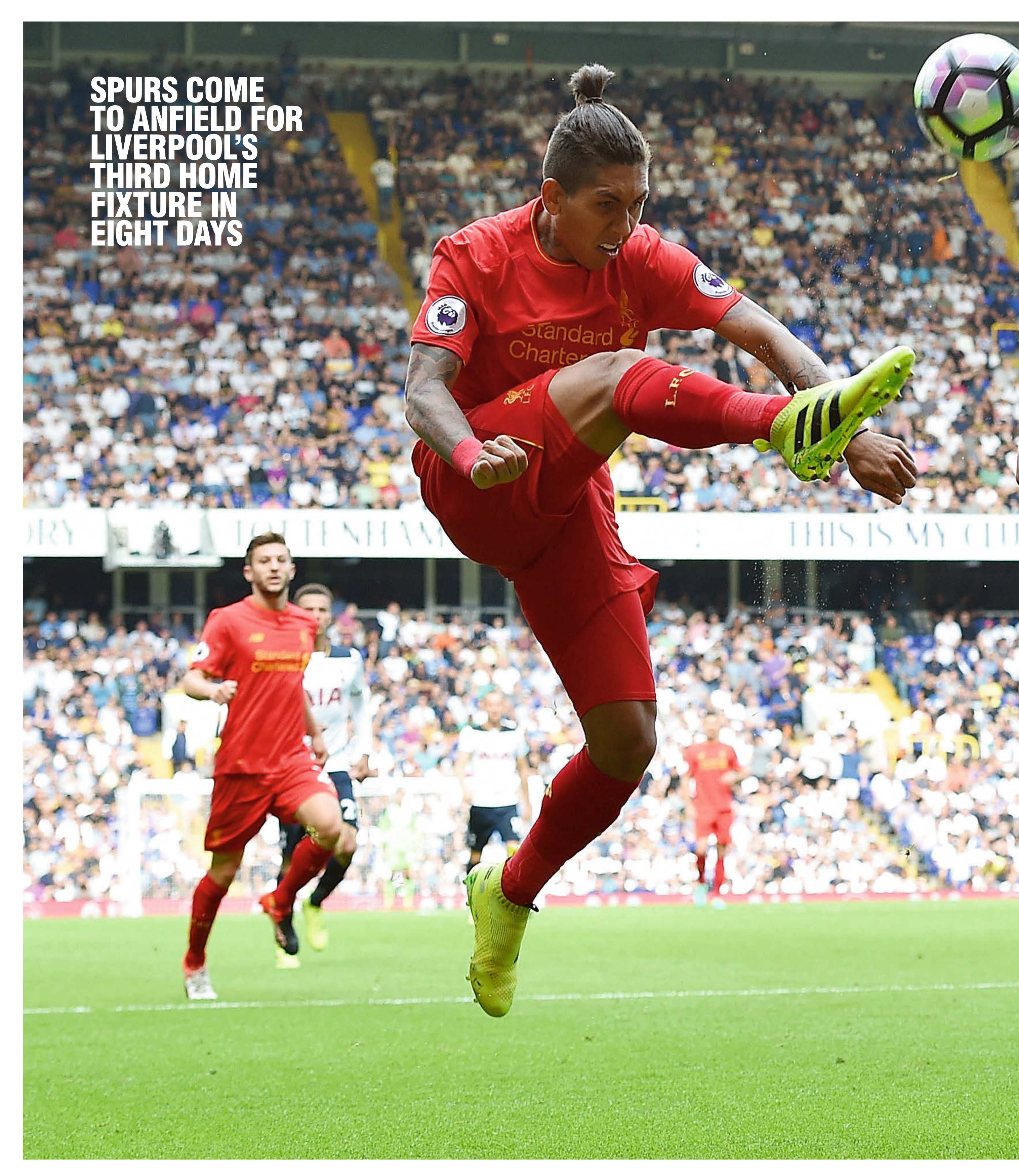
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@sadiomaneofficiel
#With my man 🙏

WHAT'S



SPURS COME TO ANFIELD FOR LIVERPOOL'S THIRD HOME FIXTURE IN EIGHT DAYS

ON: OCT

HOTSPUR DATE

The Reds' reward for their EFL Cup win at Derby County last month is a mouthwatering fourth-round clash at home to Tottenham on 25 October – LFC's third home game in eight days. Liverpool have beaten Spurs only twice in seven previous League Cup ties, and never over 90 minutes. The victories came in a fifth-round penalty shoot-out at White Hart Lane in December 2004 and the 1982 final at Wembley when Ronnie Whelan and Ian Rush struck in extra-time to help Bob Paisley's side retain the trophy.

UNITED & BAGGIES

Anfield hosts two Premier League fixtures in the space of five days as Jürgen Klopp's men go in search of six points against Manchester United and West Bromwich Albion. Both sides proved tough league opponents last season with the Red Devils claiming a Premier League double, although the Reds did gain revenge by sending their rivals out of the Europa League. West Brom also picked up a point in both outings against Klopp's men, following a 2-2 draw at Anfield with a 1-1 tie at The Hawthorns on the final day of the Premier League campaign.

EAGLES LANDING

Liverpool are set to be reunited with ex-players Christian Benteke and Martin Kelly when they make the trip to Selhurst Park to tackle Crystal Palace on 29 October. Benteke was the Reds' match-winner in the corresponding fixture in March as Liverpool came from behind to win 2-1 thanks to the Belgian's cool last-minute penalty.

DERBY DUEL

Liverpool's Under-23s host Everton in a Premier League 2 derby at Tranmere Rovers' Prenton Park on Sunday 23 Oct (1.30pm kick-off). A busy month for the U23s also sees away fixtures against the two Manchester clubs either side of the derby duel. The Reds play United at Leigh Sports Village on Tuesday 18 (7pm) and City at the Academy Stadium on Friday 28 (both 7pm). Liverpool also host Porto in the Premier League International Cup at Prenton Park on Wednesday 2 November (7pm).



DONNY DOUBLE?

Scott Rogers' Liverpool Ladies have the chance to press their claims for a top-four finish in the FA Women's Super League when they visit bottom club Doncaster Rovers Belles on Sunday 9 October. The game kicks off at the Keepmoat Stadium at 2pm with Liverpool chasing a league double after seeing off the Yorkshire side 1-0 at Widnes in August thanks to a goal from Wales international winger Natasha Harding. Liverpool Ladies' final game of the season will take place at the Select Security Stadium in Widnes on Sunday 6 November when they host top-three hopefuls Arsenal Ladies (6pm kick-off).



Birthdays and anniversaries



Bruce Grobbelaar 59 on 6 October
Trent Alexander-Arnold 18 on 7 Oct
Lloyd Jones 21 on 7 October
Sami Hypyia 43 on 7 October
Ronny Rosenthal 53 on 11 October
Chris Lawler 73 on 20 October
Ian Rush 55 on 20 October
Connor Randall 21 on 21 October
Paul Ince 48 on 21 October
David Johnson 65 on 23 October
David Burrows 48 on 25 October
Willie Stevenson 77 on 26 October
Milan Baros 35 on 28 October
Ragnar Klavan 31 on 30 October
Glenn Hysen 57 on 30 October

1 year since the Reds drew 1-1 with Rubin Kazan at Anfield in Jürgen Klopp's first home game as LFC boss.
29 years since Ray Houghton joined the club on 19 October 1987.
42 years since Phil Neal signed for the Reds on 9 October 1974.
51 years since Liverpool defeated Juventus 2-0 in a European Cup Winners Cup tie at Anfield thanks to first-half goals from Chris Lawler and Geoff Strong on 13 October 1965.
94 years since Harry Chambers scored a hat-trick in a 5-1 win over Everton at Anfield on 7 October 1922.

Ray Houghton's arrival in 1987 almost landed Kenny Dalglish in hot water with *The Daily Mirror*. In the book *The Liverpool Year*, the player-manager's own diary of season 1987/88, he wrote: 'Ray will accompany us on our trip to Dundee for a testimonial but everything must be keep secret under the terms of the transfer agreement with Oxford [whose chairman Robert Maxwell also owned the *Mirror*]'.

Kenny would then reflect: "Our big secret leaked out when supporters queuing for match tickets at Anfield recognised Ray as he passed his medical at the ground and immediately telephoned local radio stations and newspapers.

"We arrived at the hotel in Scotland to find numerous messages left for me by journalists. But my obligation was to wait until news of the transfer has been published in the first editions of the Mirror. A local Dundee photographer asked to take a group picture of the players at the hotel. Unwittingly I gave permission forgetting Ray would be on the photo!"

In the days before social media, however, the photo was not published until the paper hit the streets!



FIXTURES 2016/2017

AUGUST

Sun 14	Arsenal (A)	4-3
Sat 20	Burnley (A)	0-2
Tue 23	Burton (A, EFL2)	5-0
Sat 27	Tottenham H (A)	1-1

SEPTEMBER

Sat 10	Leicester City (H)	4-1
Fri 16	Chelsea (A)	2-1
Tue 20	Derby (A, EFL3)	3-0
Sat 24	Hull City (H)	5-1

OCTOBER

Sat 1	Swansea City (A)	2-1
Mon 17	Manchester Utd (H, 8pm)	
Sat 22	West Brom (H, 5.30pm)	
Tues 25	Tottenham (H, EFL4, 7.45pm)	
Sat 29	Crystal Palace (A, 5.30pm)	

NOVEMBER

Sun 6	Watford (H, 2.15pm)
Sat 19	Southampton (A, 3pm)
Sat 26	Sunderland (H, 3pm)
29/30	EFL Cup R5

DECEMBER

Sat 3	Bournemouth (A, 3pm)
Sat 10	West Ham United (H, 3pm)
Wed 14	Middlesbrough (A, 7.45pm)
Sat 17	Everton (A, 3pm)
Mon 26	Stoke City (H, 3pm)
Sat 31	Manchester City (H, 3pm)

JANUARY

Mon 2	Sunderland (A, 7.45pm)
7/8	Emirates FA Cup R3
10/11	EFL Cup SF 1L
Sat 14	Manchester Utd (A, 3pm)
Sat 21	Swansea City (H, 3pm)
24/25	EFL Cup SF 2L
28/29	Emirates FA Cup R4

FEBRUARY

Wed 1	Chelsea (H, 8pm)
Sat 4	Hull City (A, 3pm)
Sat 11	Tottenham Hotspur (H, 3pm)
18/19	Emirates FA Cup R5
Sat 25	Leicester City (A, 3pm)
Sun 26	EFL Cup final

MARCH

Sat 4	Arsenal (H, 3pm)
Sun 12	Burnley (H, 4pm)/FAC 6
Sat 18	Manchester City (A, 3pm)

APRIL

Sat 1	Everton (H, 3pm)
Wed 5	Bournemouth (H, 8pm)
Sat 8	Stoke City (A, 3pm)
Sun 16	West Brom (A, 3pm)
Sat 22	Crystal Palace (H, 3pm)
22/23	Emirates FA Cup SF
Sat 29	Watford (A, 3pm)

MAY

Sat 6	Southampton (H, 3pm)
Sat 13	West Ham United (A, 3pm)
Sun 21	Middlesbrough (H, 3pm)
Sat 27	Emirates FA Cup final

(LFC score shown first, all dates/KO times subject to change)



FOOTBALL

Lucas, Mane and Stewart exclusives plus the U23s in European action and LFC's extraordinary all-time Premier League stats

According to the Premier League website Jordan Henderson has completed more passes than anyone this season (up to 1 Oct) with: (a) 389 (b) 489 (c) 589? Answer on p98.

DON'S CLASS OF 57

How many faces can you recognise in this Liverpool FC first-team photo from six decades ago?

Liverpool FC was saddened to learn of the death of former player Don Campbell last month, aged 83. A tribute in the matchday programme for Liverpool v Hull City included a team-shot featuring Don from season 1957/58 (he's back-row far-right) and here it is again with all the players identified.



JOHN MOLYNEUX
Solid right-back who played 249 games for LFC in six years; returned to Chester following the emergence of Gerry Byrne.

JOHNNY WHEELER
Tough-tackling right-sided midfielder who scored a four-minute hat-trick against Port Vale in 1956; later on the Bury coaching staff.

TOMMY YOUNGER
Goalkeeper who captained Scotland at the 1958 World Cup finals; later appointed president of the Scottish FA.

LAURIE HUGHES
Long-serving centre-half who featured in the 1946/47 title-winning season, going on to captain and play 326 times for LFC.

RONNIE MORAN
Liverpool FC legend who played 379 games for the Reds before going on to serve the club in numerous coaching capacities.

DON CAMPBELL
Bootle-born defender who signed for the Reds in 1950 and made his debut in 1953; made 48 apps, scoring twice, before joining Crewe.

BRIAN JACKSON
Outside-right who spent six years with Liverpool in the 1950s; subsequently moved to Port Vale then Peterborough.

TONY ROWLEY
Scored a hat-trick on the opening day of 1954/55 but his prospects were limited by the form of Billy Liddell; later scored 47 goals for Tranmere.

BILLY LIDDELL
Another legend, the Scot scored 228 goals in 534 games in an LFC career spanning almost 15 years; one of the club's greatest-ever players.

JOHN EVANS
Signed from Charlton for £12,500 in 1953, he scored 53 goals in 107 games including five in a win over Bristol Rovers in 1954.

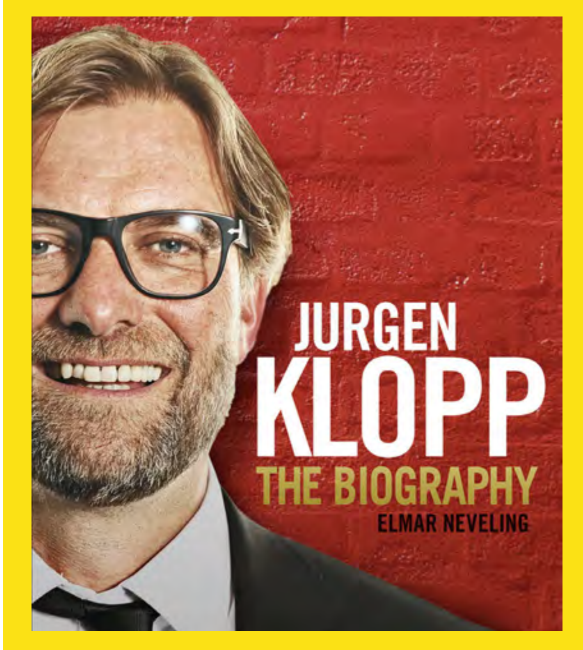
ALAN A'COURT
Rainhill-born winger who spent a decade in the first team, scoring 63 times in 381 games; farewell LFC app v KR Rejkyavik in 1964.







Adam Lallana		Philippe Coutinho
Alan da llama	ANAGRAM	Oh tulip nice hippo
14	SCRABBLE SCORE	30
Southampton	SIGNED FROM	Inter Milan
20	SHIRT NUMBER	10
Aly Cissokho	WHO WORE IT LAST?	Joe Cole
officiallallana	INSTAGRAM	phil.coutinho
691,000	INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS	2,400,000
Bournemouth	PLAYED ON LOAN AT	Espanyol
97/16	LFC GAMES/GOALS	152/32
10 May 1988	BORN	12 June 1992
Fred Astaire	SHARES A BIRTHDAY WITH	Anne Frank
Taurus	STAR SIGN	Gemini
1.72m	HEIGHT	1.71m
St Albans, UK	HOOD	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Emily Lallana	MARRIED TO	Aine Coutinho
v Slovakia (2016)	FIRST INTERNATIONAL GOAL	v Mexico (2015)
Nivea Men	FAVOURITE MOISTURISER	Nivea Men



WIN THIS KLOPP BOOK

We've got 10 copies of the new paperback edition of *Jürgen Klopp: The Biography* to give away. Written by Elmar Neveling and published by Ebury Press (£8.99) it reveals what drives the Reds manager and how he became one of football's top coaches.

To be in with a chance of winning a copy of the book, simply answer the following question and email it with your contact details to: liverpoolfcmag@trinitymirror.com with **KLOPP PAPERBACK COMPO** in the title bar.

AT WHICH CLUB DID JÜRGEN KLOPP BEGIN HIS MANAGERIAL CAREER?

(a) Schalke 04
(b) Mainz 05
(c) Hannover 96

The closing date is **Friday 4 November 2016** and winners will be notified soon after. Usual terms and conditions apply.



OHHH MANE MANE

Sadio Mane re-lives his journey from young Senegal sensation, via France, Austria and England's South Coast, to awesome Anfield attacker

We've all been in a situation when we know where we want to get to, but we're not exactly sure which route to follow. Sadio Mane's first few months at Liverpool have been a bit like that, off the field at least. "Sat nav," he says while nodding his head with approval.

"I am settling in very well, everybody has helped me, but I still don't know the city. That will take time. At the moment I'm using my sat nav every day because I don't want to get lost."

Unsure how to reach a hoped-for destination: it's nothing new for the former Southampton man. He faced the same scenario as a young boy back in Senegal. Enthralled by football almost as soon as he could walk, he spent every possible moment kicking a ball around while growing up in the town of Sedhiou in the south of the country that sits on Africa's Atlantic coast.

Idolising Ronaldinho – he would regularly attempt to replicate the tricks he saw the Brazilian attacker produce on TV – Mane was certain that he wanted to become a professional footballer. That was his dream. "When I was maybe two or three I started playing football. I think I have always had it in my heart and in my mind. There was nothing else I ever wanted to do and that is still the same right now.

"I always thought I could be a footballer. I would run away from school to go playing it with my friends and get punished when I came home later. But I'd always go playing again because I loved it so much."

Achieving that step, from being a young boy with potential to making it in the professional game, is a desire of millions around the globe. Sadio, although confident it would happen eventually, wasn't sure how to go about making it a reality. "Looking back now, at the beginning it didn't really seem possible because there weren't many football clubs around where I lived. Having a career in football seemed very difficult. In my head, though, I just thought it would happen somehow. I didn't think about the details too much."

Others around him were more realistic about his prospects which, at that point, seemed slim. "My family are very religious and wanted me to



DEBUT GOAL V GUNNERS





Emirates Stadium, Sunday 14 August 2016: the Reds have gone from 1-0 down to 3-1 up in less than half-an-hour when Mane chases an Adama Lallana pass down the right-hand channel…





There seems little danger for Arsenal with Mane running to the right of the penalty area and outnumbered by the opposition, but he quickly weaves inside and heads towards goal with intent…





Nacho Monreal and Calum Chambers are tied in knots by Sadio's searing pace and twisting turn and, with a window of opportunity suddenly created, he prepares to let fly at goal…





The shot explodes from Mane's left boot and is in the back of Petr Cech's net before the Arsenal goalkeeper hits the ground – 4-1 to the Reds in an opening-weekend Premier League thriller!

On message with the manager at Melwood

just concentrate on school – they didn't have any interest in football. Nobody really believed [becoming a footballer] was a possibility. I could see why they thought that way. Even now, my mum will phone me up and says she still can't believe that I am here playing in England in the Premier League.

"It wasn't until I was about 15 that they were finally 100 per cent convinced that football was the only thing for me. So they tried to help to make it happen."

By that stage Mane's all-round ability, and particularly his prowess when it came to progressing forward at pace with the ball at his feet, had earned him a place at the Generation Foot Academy in the capital city Dakar. "I've always been quick and been able to run with the ball. Maybe I'm faster running with the ball than without it," the 24-year-old points out.

He moved to Dakar, the most westerly point of Africa, thanks to the help of his uncle who was a football fan. Generation Foot had been set up by Mady Toure, a former footballer whose career was curtailed by injury, and one of their scouts first noticed Sadio when he was just 12. He's not the only graduate from the set-up to progress to the Premier League; others include former Newcastle United player Papiss Cisse and West Ham United's Diafra Sakho.

"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FAST, MAYBE FASTER RUNNING WITH THE BALL THAN WITHOUT IT"

The academy had forged links with FC Metz in northeast France, regularly sending players there, and that would be Mane's next destination at the age of 18. "At first France was really difficult for me," he admits.

"The weather was different, the culture, the language, so it wasn't easy as I was still young. Even the pitches were very different to what I had played on back in Senegal."

All those inevitable obstacles had to be surmounted by the teenager. The fact he did so says a lot about his character and determination, and he is quick to point out that his progress wasn't just an individual effort. "Lots of people at Metz helped me. The manager and the coaching staff and the people at the club all helped me to settle in."

It was during the 2011/12 season that he left his teenage years behind and first tasted senior football with the French Division Two outfit who can list Robert Pires, Emmanuel Adebayor and Liverpool's former centre-back Rigobert Song among their ex-players. Unfortunately that same campaign would see them win just 10 of their 38 league outings and finish in 18th position, the last of the three relegation places in the division.

Sadio had little time to think about that demotion. Instead he would spend some of the summer on British shores participating in the 2012 Olympic Games. That stage allowed him to showcase his talents to an even wider audience; Jürgen Klopp has recalled being impressed by his contribution as the African side reached the quarter-finals only to be eliminated by eventual champions Mexico.

Afterwards it was Austrian club Red Bull Salzburg who moved quickest to ensure they secured the rising talent, paying approximately €4million. Once more it was a case of having to find his feet in new surroundings. And, again, those around him at his new team aided the process of acclimatisation. In particular Mane looks back appreciatively on the contribution of Red Bull's German coach Roger Schmidt who had taken charge in that same summer of 2012.

"He's at Bayer Leverkusen now.



He was a big influence on my career thanks to the way he believed in me and helped me so much. I was still young when I went to Salzburg and working under him really helped me to grow up and grow as a player. I learned about tactics and different ways to play the game."

Deployed mainly on the wing, Sadio was part of a side that would finish second in 2012/13, then go one better 12 months later by completing the league-and-cup double. There was also an eye-catching run to the last 16 of the Europa League in 2014 that included a 3-0 away win at Ajax in the last 32, a game that saw him get on the scoresheet. It was one of over 40 goals he would net during his time at the Austrian club.

There was also exposure to a type of flexible set-up, with interchanging of positions and pressing high up the field, that Schmidt demanded of his side – something which would have prepared Mane for the way Jürgen Klopp likes to work now.

The success of Red Bull, both domestically and in European competition, was never going to go unnoticed. Premier League clubs, including West Ham and Liverpool, were linked with Mane at the end of the 2013/14 season but it would be Ronald Koeman's Southampton who moved late in the transfer-window to bring him to St Mary's.

"AT SALZBURG I WAS STILL YOUNG BUT I LEARNED ABOUT TACTICS AND DIFFERENT WAYS TO PLAY"

Twenty-one goals in 67 league appearances over two years justified Koeman's faith. Three of those goals came against Liverpool, and he got another against the Reds in a League Cup tie last December. There was also a hat-trick inside three minutes – 176 seconds to be exact – in a 6-1 trouncing of Aston Villa in May last year. In doing so Mane eclipsed the former Premier League record for a treble of four minutes and 32 seconds set by Robbie Fowler against Arsenal at Anfield in 1994. "It was incredible from Sadio," Koeman enthused



Celebrating Roberto Firmino's equaliser at Swansea City

COOL FINISH V THE FOXES





The Reds are leading 1-0 against champions Leicester City in Anfield's first Premier League game of season 2016/17 when Daniel Sturridge races towards the Foxes goal on the half-hour…





Aware of his team-mate's supporting run inside, Sturridge's back-flick finds Mane unmarked in front of goal – but with a hefty figure in the form of Kasper Schmeichel racing towards him…





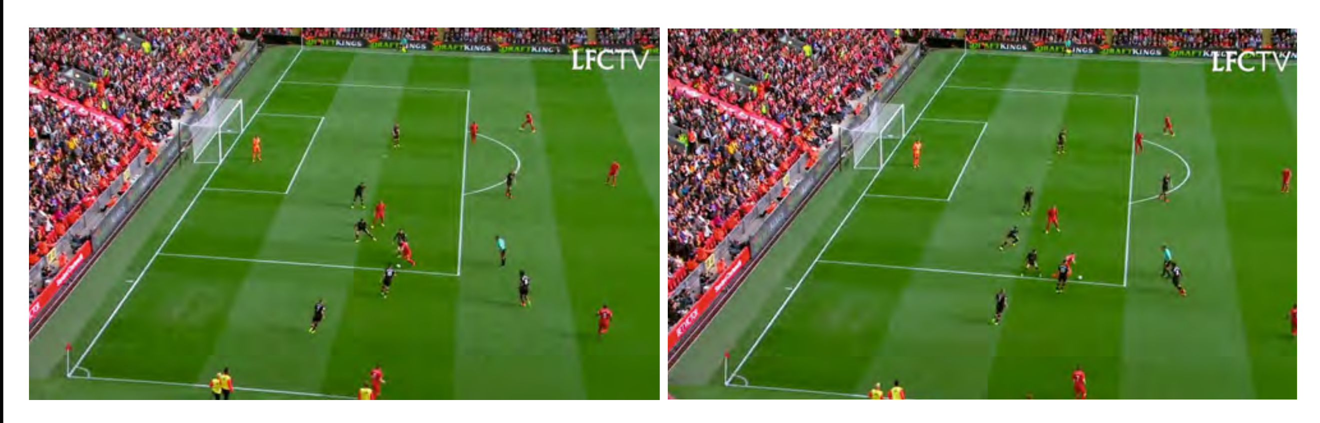
Sadio's speed enables him to reach the ball a split-second before Schmeichel and his deft touch takes it over the goalie…but is there enough precision and weight on the ball to do the rest?



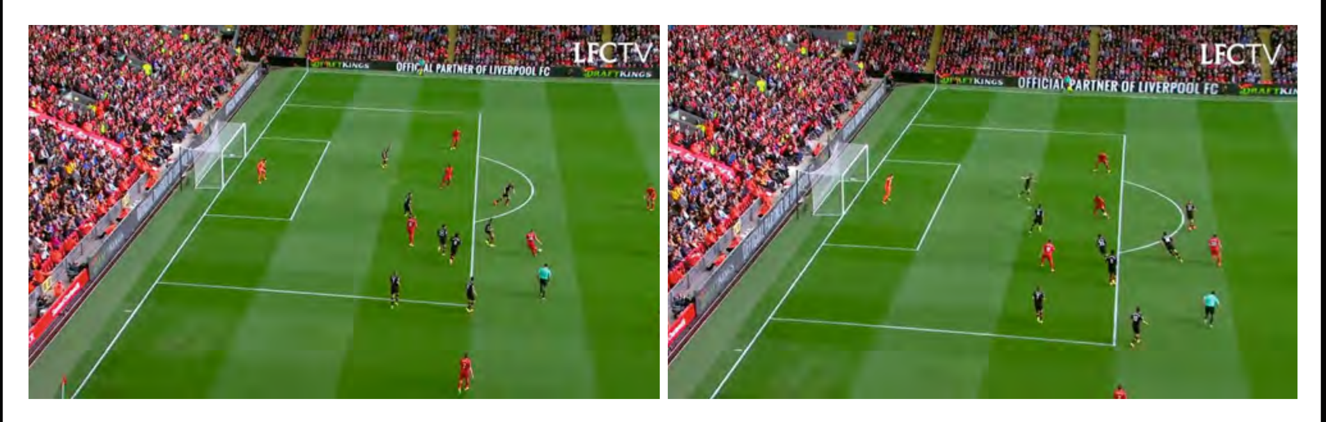


It seems like an age but the spinning ball just clears the underside of the crossbar and bounces into Leicester's unguarded net for Mane's second Premier League strike of the season!

TURN AND SHOT PAST THE TIGERS



Sadio's goal in the 5-1 victory over Hull City at Anfield owes much to the support work of team-mate Adam Lallana, who wrong-foots his marker just inside the penalty area to make space…



Lallana drifts outside the box then pings a precise ball into the path of Mane who for a moment is unmarked in front of the Tigers goal on the edge of the 18-yard line with lots still to do…



The ball is slightly behind Mane as he receives it from Lallana but he has only one intention, swivelling and firing instinctively towards goal before Hull's defenders can converge and block…



City keeper David Marshall is rooted to the spot as Sadio's daisy-cutter finds the corner of the net unerringly; it makes the score 3-0 for the rampant Reds with no way back for the visitors!



"IN THIS SYSTEM EVERYBODY KNOWS THEIR JOB AND WE ARE ENJOYING THE WAY WE PLAY"

afterwards. "A player like him, to get that kind of space, he will punish you."

That was one of two occasions when he went home with the match-ball under his arm as a Southampton player, the other treble coming towards the end of last season in a 4-2 victory over Manchester City. Those performances were some of the high points in his two years on the South Coast.

Naturally, not every game went the same way and at times he struggled to consistently produce his best. Part of the reason may have been that he was, once more, adapting to a new environment. Evidence came from staff at the Saints training ground walking into meeting-rooms to find them occupied by Mane and his English teacher, as he brushed up on the language.

Just as he was getting to know a new country and its people, they were still trying to figure him out. 'Moody' was how some Southampton supporters referred to him, allegedly because he didn't always smile on the pitch. He laughs at that accusation now. "Some people say I don't smile enough. I think that's wrong. I'm usually smiling and having a laugh in training because I enjoy football. Ronaldinho always did that and I've always tried to copy him. I think footballers have plenty of reasons to smile. We have a great job that everybody would like to have."

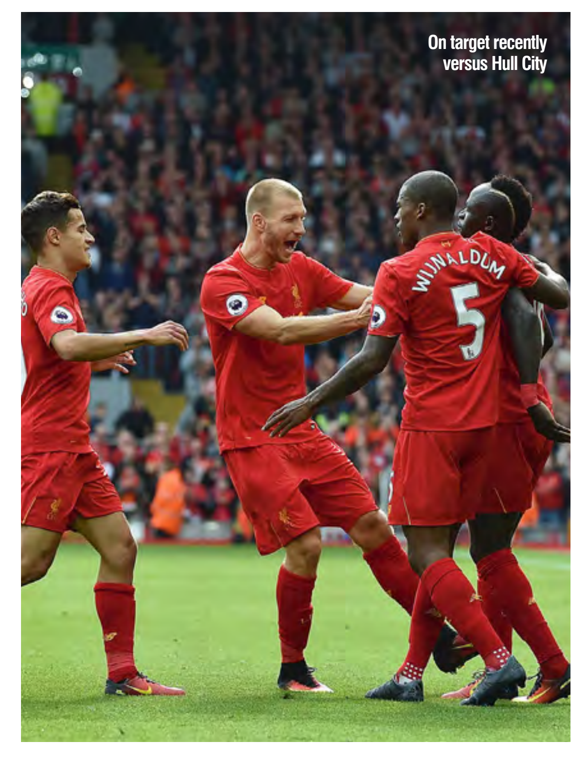
Since he swapped red-and-white stripes for all-red, we've seen that grin several times, not least when finding the net – and his positivity has been infectious for team-mates and fans alike. There was a terrific ovation as Mane departed the action just before the final whistle on his home debut against Leicester City last month.

Scoring one and creating another in that resounding 4-1 triumph over the champions was a great example of the attacking input Klopp wants from his players and the flexible system he is trying to create. It's also been witnessed in other games, like Arsenal and Chelsea away, and Hull City at home. The second of those victories in the capital left *Sunday Times* reporter Jonathan Northcroft purring with approval. He wrote: 'You watched Sadio Mane, starting at no7 but arriving in the no10 position and then the no9, with Daniel Sturridge drifting. You watched Georginio Wijnaldum and Adam Lallana switching from twin no8s to twin no10s and back again.

'You saw Philippe Coutinho float and reflected that Liverpool's most flexible player of all, Roberto Firmino, wasn't even on the pitch, and you saw the dangerous and collective randomness in Liverpool's game. Forget heavy metal, this was orchestral – albeit a high-octane, challenging, modernist piece, rather than gentle Bach'.

Mane confirms: "It's a system where everybody knows their job. Roberto, Coutinho, Studge, Adam…we know each other's game. It's become easier for us thanks to working on it and we are enjoying playing this way. Whether I'm starting upfront or out-wide isn't really the most important thing. The manager says be free and then get into dangerous areas where you can hurt the opposition."

Not for the first time, Mane knows where he wants to be. On this occasion, though, the fact that there's no precise route makes the journey even more thrilling for him, and us.



On target recently versus Hull City

Words John Hynes


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THESE GET OUR VOTE!

Sadio Mane's strike at Arsenal won the BBC's Goal of the Month as did these back in the day…

Christian Benteke v Man United (A) Sept 2015

Jordon Ibe's cross was half-cleared and the ball looped towards the edge of the United area. As it travelled through the air, Benteke, with his back to goal, connected perfectly with a bicycle-kick.



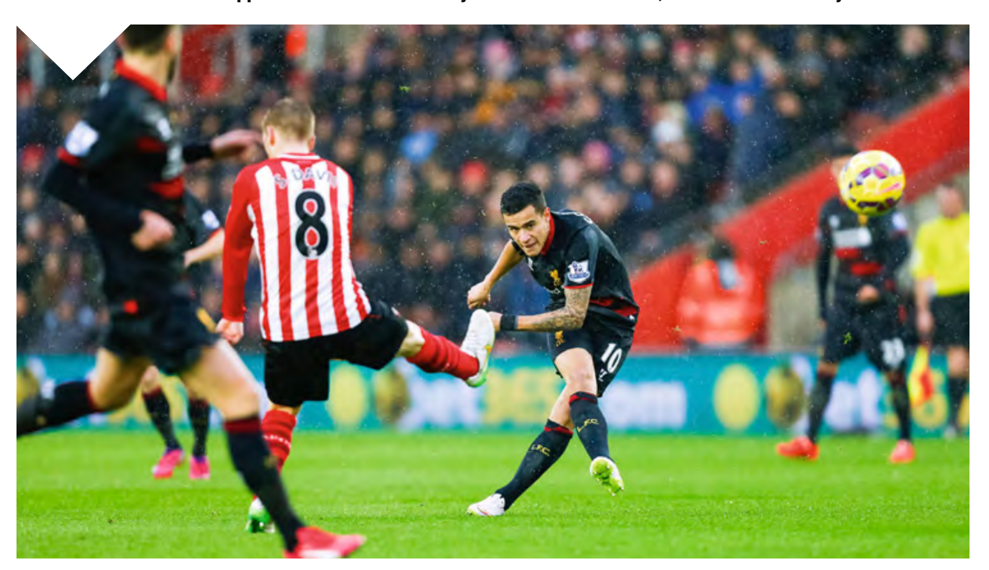


Philippe Coutinho v Southampton (A) Feb 2015

Goals that crash in off the woodwork always look good and this was no exception. Two minutes into this fixture, the no10 unleashed a strike from distance that clipped the crossbar on its way home.

Philippe Coutinho v Stoke City (A) Aug 2015

Defeated 6-1 at the same venue a few months earlier, this time Liverpool proved far more resilient against the Potters. Four minutes from the end of the opening-weekend fixture, Couthino turned away from his marker and netted with a powerful dipping shot.



Daniel Sturridge v Everton (H) Jan 2014

Two minutes earlier the England striker had made it 2-0, adding to Steven Gerrard's opener. That became three when Sturridge chased Kolo Toure's long, bouncing ball and delicately hooked it over the onrushing Toffees goalkeeper Tim Howard.

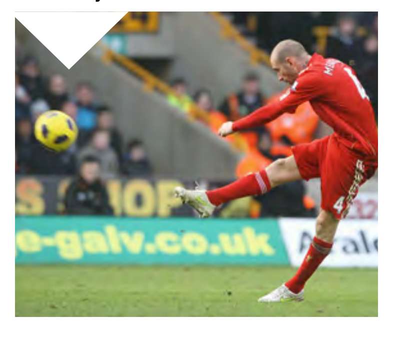


Luis Suarez v Norwich City (H) Dec 2013

The Uruguayan marksman had complained of a tight hamstring before this midweek fixture. By the end of the evening he was walking off with the matchball after netting four goals. The best was his opener: a dipping strike from fully 45 yards.

Raul Meireles v Wolves (A) Jan 2011

Kenny Dalglish's maiden win in his second spell as Reds boss was memorable for the Portuguese midfielder's 50th-minute strike at Molineux. As the ball dropped to him around 25 yards from goal, he hit a first-time volley into the Wolves net.





Fernando Torres v Sunderland (H) March 2010

Picking up possession on the left flank from a Pepe Reina kick-out, the striker twisted his way inside the box. His route to goal appeared blocked by defenders… until he arced a powerful shot into the opposite corner of the net.



Fernando Torres v Blackburn Rovers (H) April 2009
On the day of the Hillsborough anniversary El Nino paid his own tribute by pointing to the skies inside five minutes. It was Torres at his unstoppable best, taking the ball on his chest before dispatching a volley into the far corner.

Daniel Agger v West Ham (H) Aug 2006
Following the 2006 FA Cup final the Hammers were once again on the receiving end of a long-range strike. Defender Daniel Agger picked up possession before moving forward then swerving a left-footed effort into the Kop net from 30 yards.





Steven Gerrard v West Ham (Cardiff) May 2006
The captain was suffering from cramp so felt it best not to try to control the ball when it came to him in stoppage-time at the Millennium Stadium. Instead he struck it first time and it arrowed beyond goalkeeper Shaka Hislop to make it 3-3 in an epic FA Cup final. What. A. Goal.

Xabi Alonso v Arsenal (H) Nov 2004
A game best remembered for a Neil Mellor winner also featured this effort. Steve Finnan switched the ball to the left where Harry Kewell nodded it down to Steven Gerrard whose weighted pass allowed Alonso to do the rest.





Steven Gerrard v Man Utd (H) March 2001
A spectacular week that would include cup semi-finals against Barcelona and Wycombe Wanderers (!) kicked off with the then-20-year-old's thunderbolt past keeper Fabien Barthez in a Saturday lunchtime kick-off.



Ian Rush v Oldham (H) April 1993
Here's how *The Guardian* called Rushie's 297th LFC goal: 'Don Hutchison tapped it out to Rush, who drifted wide on the right, dragging the defence with him, before cutting in to finish with a left-foot drive to the top corner'.

John Barnes v Blackburn (A) Oct 1994
This topsy-turvy game saw Robbie Fowler give us the lead before Kenny Dalglish's Rovers team struck twice. Then Barnes made it 2-2 with a stunning overhead-kick from Stig Igne Bjornebye's cross against the champions-elect.



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DANCES WITH WO



Photography by Nick Taylor

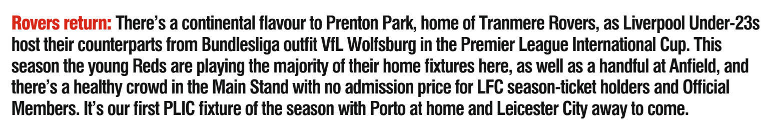
Liverpool U23s travel ‘over the water’ for a first Premier League International Cup game of the season against German side Wolfsburg

LVES









Rovers return: There's a continental flavour to Prenton Park, home of Tranmere Rovers, as Liverpool Under-23s host their counterparts from Bundlesliga outfit VfL Wolfsburg in the Premier League International Cup. This season the young Reds are playing the majority of their home fixtures here, as well as a handful at Anfield, and there's a healthy crowd in the Main Stand with no admission price for LFC season-ticket holders and Official Members. It's our first PLIC fixture of the season with Porto at home and Leicester City away to come.




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Red marauders: Toni Gomes (far left) plays upfront in a fluid 4-3-3 formation with Ben Woodburn (left) and Cameron Brannagan (above) supporting him. In the middle it's captain Harry Wilson with Matty Virtue (subbed later for Adam Phillips) and Pedro Chirivella (below left) taking turns to drop deep as a 'number 6'. The back-four consists of Connor Randall, Joe Maguire and central pairing Tiago Ilori and Mamadou Sakho (two of the permitted over-23 outfield players). Early into the second period Wolfsburg take the lead but Brooks Lennon, on for Gomes, fires home Liverpool's equaliser (below) after good work down the left flank from Woodburn.



Mission of Mersey: scorer Lennon is congratulated by team-mates. Wolfsburg snatch victory late on but it's been a valiant display from the Reds.


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"I'M PROUD TO BE PART OF THIS TEAM"

We asked Lucas if he knew he was one of an exclusive XI to collectively clock up over 3,000 Premier League appearances for LFC…and here's what he said

You don't have to have a sense of humour to be a professional footballer, but it certainly helps. Especially in a city like Liverpool.

Wags on the Kop came long before WAGS were being photographed by the paparazzi, and while Lucas might not quite have a Scouse accent after almost a decade of living on Merseyside, he gets our humour and knows how to deliver a joke in self-depreciating style.

During Liverpool's 4-1 victory against Leicester City in September, the Brazilian, playing at centre-half, gifted Jamie Vardy a simple goal with a stray pass. Afterwards he didn't go hiding, as some players might, but visited one of the new Main Stand lounges to speak directly to Liverpool supporters. Inevitably the subject of his uncharacteristic error cropped up.

"My first assist for 10 years!" he exclaimed with a beaming smile across his face. The lounge erupted into laughter.

The 29-year-old would have rather not made the mistake in the first place and is obviously thankful it didn't prove costly. But his

willingness to face the fans, laugh it off and put it behind him was symbolic of how experienced he now is. Indeed Lucas is even more experienced than he realised himself.

That Leicester City game was his 225th Premier League appearance for the club, easily the most clocked up by any non-European-born player to have worn red in the modern era (Philippe Coutinho, who made his 111th PL appearance against the Foxes, is his nearest challenger).

Such a tally puts Lucas, currently our longest-serving player, 10th on the all-time list of most Premier League appearances for Liverpool above some esteemed names including Alonso, Hamann, Kuyt, Barnes, Rush and Suarez. But when I hand him a notepad with the Reds' all-time Prem XI written upon it, he is somewhat taken aback. "I hadn't realised the Leicester game was my 225th in the Premier League for Liverpool or that I had made enough appearances to get into this team," he says before scanning his eyes down the list.

"I don't think I'll be able to catch Carra and Stevie with the amount of games they played! And look at Sami, 318 games!"

When these statistical-based teams are compiled you often end up with an unrecognisable formation featuring five strikers and no left-backs, but Liverpool's all-time Premier League appearances eleven wouldn't need too much tinkering-with.

Jamie Carragher would have to revert to right-back with Sami Hyypia and Martin Skrtel at centre-half, and Steven Gerrard's experience of playing on the right under Gerard Houllier and Rafael Benitez would come in useful with Steve McManaman operating on the left. But other than that, the side picks itself formation-wise. Not that Lucas has played in the same team as some of the other lads on the list.

"I JUST HADN'T REALISED I'D MADE ENOUGH APPEARANCES TO GET INTO A SIDE LIKE THIS"

"I played with all of the back four – I even played alongside Martin at centre-half against Watford last season – but not the others. You've got me in the centre of midfield with Jamie Redknapp, but I never saw him play. He had retired from football before I arrived at Liverpool, as had Steve McManaman.

"I do remember McManaman playing for Real Madrid. He was a big player here but also for Real in Spain and Europe. I remember him winning the Champions League with them twice – he scored in the final against Valencia [in 2000] – and I know Steve personally. He is a good guy.

"That front two of Fowler and Owen, they'd score some goals! Robbie left Liverpool in the same summer that I arrived here [2007] and of course Owen had left earlier for Real Madrid. Both of them came through the Academy to score a lot of goals for the club and Robbie is always around the place now.



A word with the boss

LFC'S ALL-TIME PREMIER LEAGUE APPS XI

PEPE REINA 285

JAMIE CARRAGHER 508

MARTIN SKRTEL 242

SAMI HYYPIA 318

JOHN ARNE RIISE 234

STEVEN GERRARD 504

LUCAS 225

JAMIE REDKNAPP 231

STEVE MCMANAMAN 240

MICHAEL OWEN 216

ROBBIE FOWLER 266

"I think that would be a decent team, to be honest. With me sat in front of that back-four I think we could let the other five just play and score some goals between them!"

The top four players on the list are Carragher (508 apperances), Gerrard (504), Hyypia (318) and Reina (285), all of whom Lucas played alongside for the Reds. Perhaps it wouldn't be the most free-scoring five-a-side team you could imagine, but they'd be hard to score against.

"Pepe is probably the best goalkeeper I've ever played with alongside Julio Cesar, whom I played with for the Brazilian national team," he says when I mention his former Spanish team-mate. "I'd say that Pepe was probably at his peak when I first arrived here in 2007. He was very confident and he was incredible with his feet. It was like having another outfield player in the team. He was very good and he was a natural leader as well, something I think is very important as a goalkeeper."

Lucas, who has also made 93 cup appearances in domestic and European competition for the Reds, credits Hyypia with being more than just a commanding centre-half who was a rock-like presence for a decade at Anfield. "Sami is an incredible guy. When I arrived at Liverpool he was very important for me. I couldn't speak English very well but he tried to show me the way and was very patient and very professional with me.

"Sami was coming towards the end of his Liverpool career when I came here, but he is an absolute legend. What a player he was. He was very confident, very secure and a guy who I used to look up to a lot when I was a young player here."

That leaves the Scouse duo of Stevie G and Jamie C who between them made over 1,000 Premier League appearances and scored a combined tally of 124 goals, although Gerrard may just have netted a few more that Carragher! Lucas believes the leadership qualities they displayed during their Anfield days should never be underestimated.

"WITH ME SAT IN FRONT OF THE BACK-FOUR WE COULD LET THE OTHER FIVE PLAY AND SCORE!"

"Carra and Stevie were both leaders. Carra's personality and character made him very demanding and very loud! But he is someone that led in the dressing-room naturally.

"Of course Stevie was also a leader and our captain. He had unbelievable quality and when the team was not playing well we would look towards him. We knew he could step up and do something brilliant when we needed it and he did that so many times for us.

"I have to say, though, that all of the lads in this team who I played with, from Pepe, Sami and Riise – who I was only here for one year with – to Martin, Carra and Stevie, were professional guys and good people. That is very important to me and I'm proud to be part of this team."

He's also part of it on merit and don't bet against Lucas catching a few of the lads ahead of him on the list before his 10th season as a Liverpool FC player comes to a close.



Check out our man's tackling stats elsewhere in this issue

Words: Chris McLoughlin



20

GOALS SCORED FROM FREE-KICKS BY LIVERPOOL IN THE PREMIER LEAGUE 1992-2016

Of course there was football before season 1992/93 but who doesn't love a shedload of LFC stats?

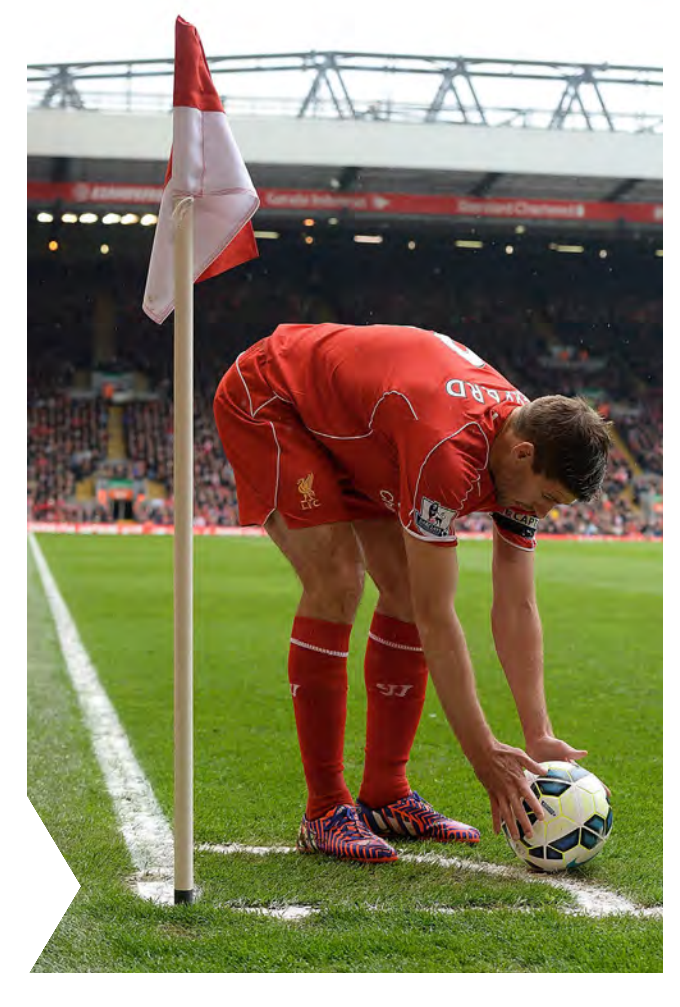


931

matches played since the start of season 1992/93 with 461 wins and 236 defeats; the Reds are fourth in the all-time list behind Man United (590 wins), Arsenal (507) and Chelsea (490). Of those 931 LFC games, 344 have been clean-sheets for the team

901

corners taken by Steven Gerrard, more than any other player in Premier League history; second is Stewart Downing with 866 then Ashley Young (788), Frank Lampard (749) and Leighton Baines (684)



1541

GOALS SCORED BY LFC – THAT'S AN AVERAGE OF 1.66 PER MATCH – WITH 954 CONCEDED (WHICH IS 1.02 PER MATCH)

6725

shots by Liverpool with 2,186 on target and a shooting accuracy of 33%

52

penalties scored putting the Reds third in the table for all-time Premier League successful spot-kicks behind Chelsea (56) and Manchester City (55)





945

tackles made by Lucas, only four less than the most (Gareth Barry 949); as a team the Reds have made 9,021 tackles in Premier League history with a success-rate of 75%

116

goals scored by Liverpool from outside the penalty box – only Man City have more with 118 – with 16 of them in the last year under Jürgen Klopp

189844

PASSES SINCE THE START OF 1992/93 – THAT'S 204 PER MATCH WITH A PASS ACCURACY OF 81%

2

Premier League player of the season awards – for Luis Suarez in 2013/14 and Michael Owen in 1997/98; plus five Premier League player of the month awards for Steven Gerrard (March 2009, April 2006, December 2004, March 2003 and March 2001), more than any other Red

195

times Liverpool have hit the woodwork in the Premier League – more than any other team; Arsenal are next with 173 times then Manchester United with 153



2

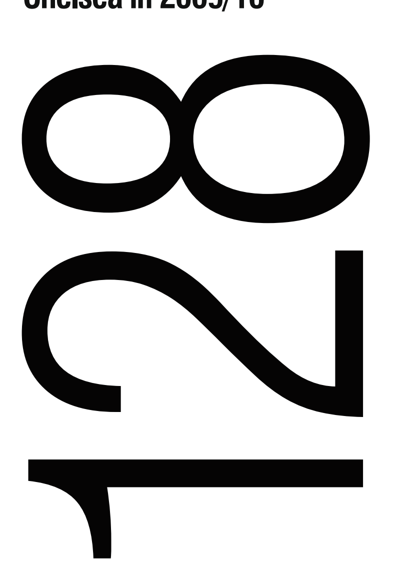
former Reds head the list of aerial battles won: Peter Crouch with 1,601 and Andy Carroll with 960, both with various Premier League clubs

3

Premier League winner's medals in current LFC squad: James Milner with Man City in 2013/14 and 11/12 and Daniel Sturridge with Chelsea in 2009/10

294

SAVES MADE BY LIVERPOOL GOALKEEPERS SINCE 1992/93



GOALS SCORED BY ROBBIE FOWLER FOR LIVERPOOL IN THE PREMIER LEAGUE, MORE THAN ANY OTHER REDS PLAYER; NEXT IT'S STEVEN GERRARD (120), MICHAEL OWEN (118), LUIS SUAREZ (69), FERNANDO TORRES (65), DIRK KUYT (51), IAN RUSH (45), DANIEL STURRIDGE (41), STEVE MCMANAMAN (41) AND EMILE HESKEY (39)



All stats from premierleague.com up to and including Saturday 1 October 2016


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WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN

In September 2015 his loan-spell with Swindon was cut short by a ligament injury; a year on and Kevin Stewart is part of Liverpool FC's first-team squad. Here's how he sees it…

I had mixed feelings when I was released by Tottenham Hotspur back in 2014...

I was sad because I was leaving somewhere where I'd been for the whole of my childhood. But I was a little relieved as well because I couldn't really see myself going anywhere with Spurs at that moment, and I thought it would probably be best to get out and experience somewhere else, maybe playing in the Football League.

To be honest it didn't really come into my head to go to another Premier League club, especially one like Liverpool. I was close to signing for Sheffield United. I played a friendly with them, trained there and really liked it. They had a good manager and a good team and that was an option that I was thinking really seriously about before I came to Liverpool.

The decision I had to make was whether to have another go at playing with the Under-21s [this time with Liverpool] and trying to break through again like I had at Spurs, or to play regular league games [with another club] and develop that way.

It was a hard decision and I spoke to a lot of friends and coaches, my agent and my dad. My dad and I were Liverpool fans so that was a draw. At the end of the day I couldn't turn down Liverpool so I thought I'd give it another shot with a Premier League club.

When I joined Liverpool I still saw my future as a defender...

At Tottenham I'd played across the back-four: at right-back, centre-back and left-back. I didn't play as a midfielder for the first six months here either. Before that, playing in midfield had been mentioned on a few occasions. I had worked with Alex Inglethorpe in the Under-18s at Spurs and he did mention that he thought I could play in there. I had never played in that position but I'd always felt reasonably comfortable on the ball so I guess that's one of the things the coaches saw.

To be honest I wasn't too keen on the positional switch at first. I thought I would have been behind other players in terms of learning a position when there were other midfielders who were much more experienced. That was particularly the case being at a top club where I would be up against top midfielders who have played in that position their whole lives.

I thought I'd be too far behind them to be able to play at the top level in that position and I also thought it would be hard for me to get out on-loan as a midfield player. But I ended up going to Cheltenham under Paul Buckle



[in January 2015]. He was probably the only person who would have taken me in that position at the time so I am grateful to him for that. From there on I did grow in the role, I felt more comfortable than I first expected and that gave me a bit more belief in myself to play there. [LFC Academy coaches] Alex Inglethorpe and Mick Beale also believed in me and they helped a lot.

I always want to be the best at whatever I do...

I have always wanted to learn and improve. Whatever position I would play in, I always wanted to be the best in it. As soon as I went into midfield I wanted to get as much information about the position as possible and get as much practice in as possible. Even as a youngster, if I wasn't selected in a specific position for a game I'd tend to drift into the middle where it is hardest to play and that's helped me out.

I think I've adapted to the defensive part of the position. That was the easiest part for me but it still wasn't – or isn't – easy. It is not too different from centre-back and a lot of the principles are the same. It's just that being in the middle, players can come from any angle behind you or in front of you. Checking your shoulder and receiving the ball is the hardest aspect and I think that's what every midfielder finds difficult. I always try and practise that as much as possible.

As a centre-back, most of your focus is forwards and you know that not much of the play will be happening behind you. Even as a full-back you've always got the touchline to the side of you, so you know that nothing is coming from that side. It's all a case of adaptation which is something that will hopefully come as I play more games.

When you consider all the aspects of the midfielder's role and then you watch people like Andres Iniesta, who does it all so easily, it makes you appreciate just how good he is and makes you want to be like that. When I watch matches I like to look at the midfielders: seeing where they can turn and where they do; whether a player has come from one shoulder or another. That's what I find entertaining in games. When you are a player yourself, you probably watch games differently to other spectators as you're focusing on players in your position and how they are going about things.

"WHEN I WATCH MATCHES I LOOK AT OTHER MIDFIELDERS AND HOW THEY GO ABOUT THINGS"


Spurs player in 2013

I didn't expect to play a single game for Liverpool last season...

I expected to play the whole year on-loan at Swindon and didn't have any thoughts at all of coming back and playing for Liverpool. My role was just to try and get as many league games in as I could and play as well as possible for Swindon. There are so many examples of how things can change really quickly in football and that was the case for me. It was still surprising that it turned out as well as it did for me. I was injured at Swindon and naturally I was really sad at the time. I'd had a big setback and was going to miss quite a lot of football.

At that time, I couldn't imagine that it would end up turning out better for me, but in the end it proved to be a positive. I returned to training back here at Liverpool around December-time. I went to the Academy, trained there a few times, played in a friendly and then not long after that I made my debut in the FA Cup tie at Exeter City.

Signing a longer-term contract in February was a massive boost for me...

I had started to play some games and had just made my Premier League debut the day before I picked up another injury. I was really upset about that because I thought I was going to have some more lost time. So to be offered the contract guaranteed me some time here which made me feel secure and safe. I knew I had more than enough time to come back, get fit and try and impress here. Now if I have a bad period and I'm out of the squad or out of the team, I know that I've got time to keep proving myself.

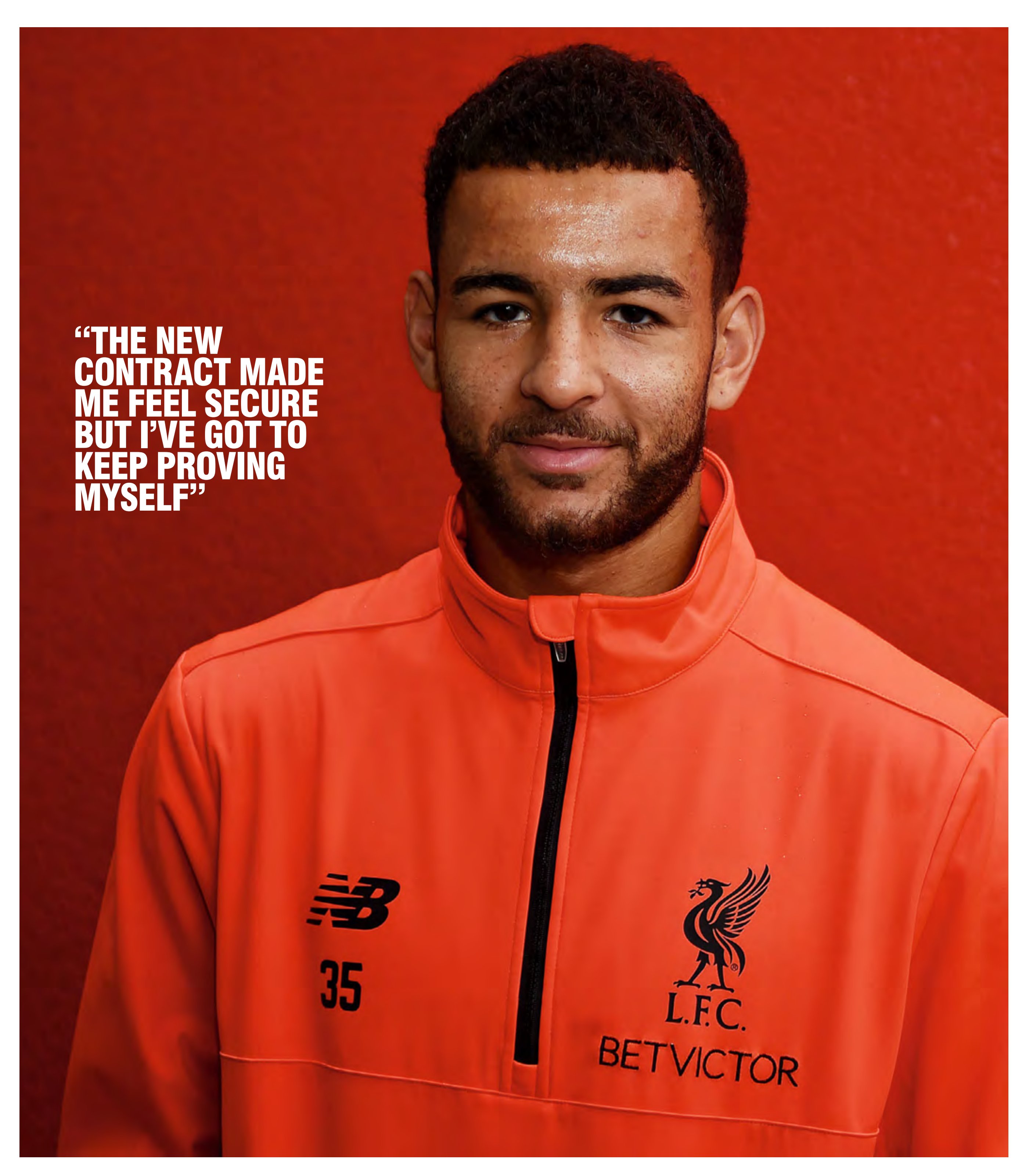
Jürgen Klopp is the first manager I've worked under at the top level...

At Spurs I didn't work under the first-team manager too closely. I'd have a short period and then go back to the academy, so it is a big plus for me to be working under the gaffer here and it gives me confidence that he has kept me up at Melwood this season. It did cross my mind that it might be a bit

Words: William Hughes



In the thick of it for the Reds at Stamford Bridge



harder to be involved this year than it was last [campaign] with fewer fixtures, but I just train hard and take it day-by-day and make sure that if I'm called upon, I'm ready.

It's good to know that the manager has faith in me and that if I have a bad game it's not the end of the world because he's seen me play well too. It has been nice to be involved in five of the first six games. You can't really tell when you are going to be needed so you've just got to make sure that you are fully prepared for when you are.

There are so many good examples of players you can learn from here...

I can look at senior pros and midfielders such as Hendo, Milly and Lucas and see what they do in training and in the games. That's who I've got to compete against and be like if I want to be at this level. Milly has been playing at this standard since he was 16 so I have to learn from people like that and while not copy them exactly, be able to use them to learn lessons for myself and help me along the way.

This summer the club brought in players like Joel Matip, Gini Wijnaldum and Ragnar Klavan. I think the relationship has got to be good between a defensive midfielder and the centre-backs and other midfield players as that is an important three in the centre of the pitch. The new signings are all really good players who know how to play the game so I don't think it is too hard to gel together. But of course the more you play together and get to know each other,

the more that improves the relationship you have. They speak good English and are all good guys so it hasn't been hard to chat and get to know them.

My focus is upon improving in my position...

I understand what the manager wants from me but it's about really feeling it and making sure that all those things he wants become second nature; doing things without thinking about it because you've done them so many times and he's told you so many times that you get that feel for it. Things will come along from there in terms of evolving my game.

"THE VOLUME IS DIFFERENT AND WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE MAIN STAND IT'S JUST SO HIGH"

At the minute the manager wants the defensive midfielder to offer good protection to the defenders so you naturally hold back. I believe that the more you play, the more you understand: okay, now is a good time to go forward, you've got someone else protecting you.

As I say, I've only been playing in this position for just over a year so I think it's best that I keep it basic for now and then that will give me a base to push on and improve.

My main aim for this season is just to try and help the team. Whether someone's tired and it's my turn to come on and give the team more energy, or if someone's injured and I'm selected to play, you just want to add value to the team and try and show how good you are at the same time. Being available is good for everyone: the manager, the team and me so my main objectives are staying fit, staying available and trying to improve.

It was nice going back to Burton Albion and Tottenham...

I got a little clap from the Burton fans and it was nice that they remembered me from my loan spell [Kevin scored the goal that guaranteed the Brewers the League Two title back in 2015].

It was nice to go back to the stadium, see a few familiar faces and it was good for us to win there. Burton have done so well with two promotions and they are doing well in the Championship now in mid-table, so that's really good to see.

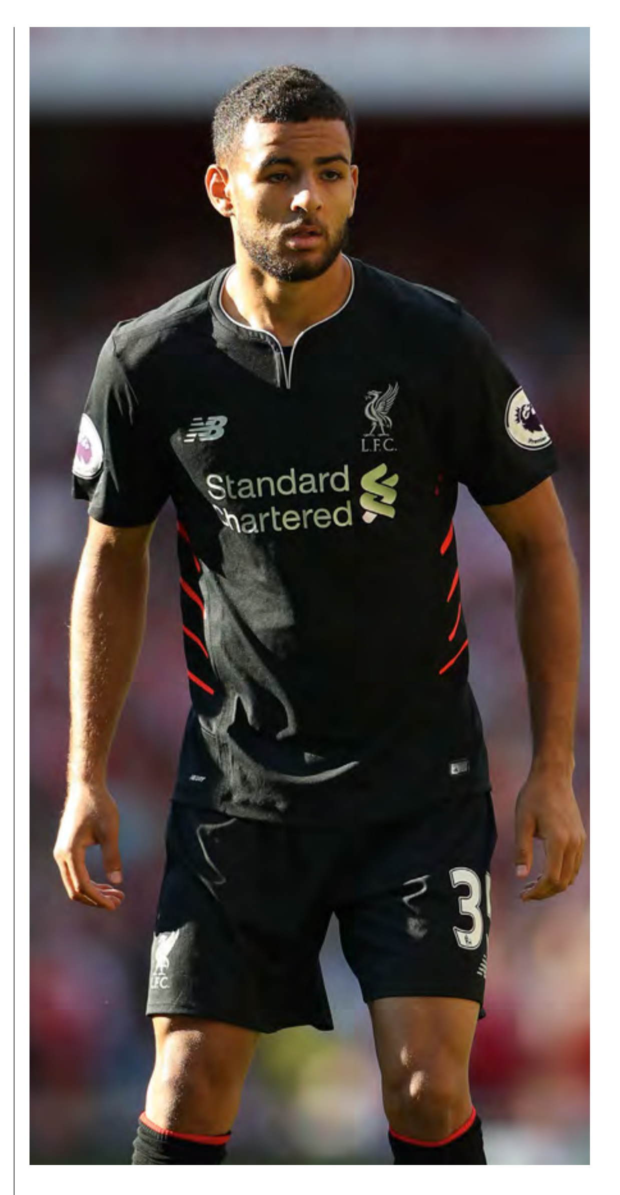
When I came on at Spurs it was the first time I'd played a senior fixture at White Hart Lane so it was nice for me to get an appearance there even though I didn't touch the ball! I had played there for Spurs in the old Next Gen tournament and various youth games but never in a first-team fixture so it's a nice story when you think about it.

I believe I had some boos from the Arsenal fans [because of his Tottenham past] when I came on in the opening fixture of the season. I didn't even realise at the time because when I start preparing to go on as a substitute, I tend to zone in and block everything out so that my focus is on the game. But I find it quite funny and I guess it's some kind of compliment!

The new-look Anfield is loud...

The volume at the Leicester City game was different. It was so loud and then when you look up at the Main Stand and see it, it is just so high. It really is special. It was so good to win there against the champions too. It was an amazing day.

We had trained at Anfield a couple of days beforehand and it was good to go there and see it before a main match, to get a feel for the changing-rooms that are in for a couple of months and so on. My dad was at the match but he was in the lower tier. He enjoys going to the games and I'm sure he'll want to see one from higher up in the Main Stand before too long!



Less than 24 hours later I was playing against Leicester again for the U-23s and it was good to get the minutes in. These games are a platform to practise what the manger asks of you and show what I've taken in from the things that he and the coaches have said to me in training sessions. There are bits that I learn in training that I want to show on matchdays and these games give me the opportunity to work on them and help my confidence.

Different leagues: Kevin's loan spells

April-May 2013 Crewe Alexandra
League One 4 apps 0 goals

Jan 2015 Cheltenham Town
League Two 4 apps 1 goal

March-May 2015 Burton Albion
League Two 7 apps 2 goals

Aug-Sept 2015 Swindon Town
League One 7 apps 0 goals


CREWE ALEXANDRA



CHELTENHAM TOWN


BURTON ALBION



SWINDON TOWN



“THIS IS LIKE MY SECOND FAMILY AND WE ARE REALLY SUPER FOCUSED AS A TEAM”

Liverpool Ladies have enjoyed a fine run of late, with the narrow loss to Birmingham their first in the league for over four months...

It’s been a really good second half of the season, for sure. We’ve really got into our rhythm with everything and I think everyone has started gelling together quite smoothly.

It took a little bit of patience when the season first started. Everyone was wanting to go from zero to 100 in the first split-second but then I think we all realised it was going to take some time. I’m super proud of everyone for putting in the work week in, week out, and we’ve been getting our rewards with some good results. The defeat at Birmingham last month was a little bit of a disappointment but we will keep going and focus on the last two games of this season and aim to finish as high as we can.

The positive results since May must give you plenty of hope for next season too...

Most definitely. If we can truly start next season in the same way as we have done in the second half of this season, I don’t see why we can’t be contenders for winning the league next year. I know that might sound a little far-fetched to some people but you can never dream too big.

We do seem to have found a good rhythm after the initial run of matches when we were bedding-in nine new signings. I believe that as long as we can have the same focus as we have had from now until the time we start the league campaign again next year, then we can definitely do some damage in the WSL next season.

It has been an encouraging first season for Liverpool Ladies manager Scott Rogers, hasn’t it?

Yes, especially considering how we did last year when we were so close to being relegated. Scott came in and has done really well. I think he has brought in a really good group of girls who, first and foremost, enjoy playing together.

The way he goes about managing and coaching us means that each and every one of us has learnt something new and developed in some way this season, so all credit to him for not allowing the fact that it was his first year as coach to distract him. He’s been focused from the beginning and I’m grateful for everything he’s done.

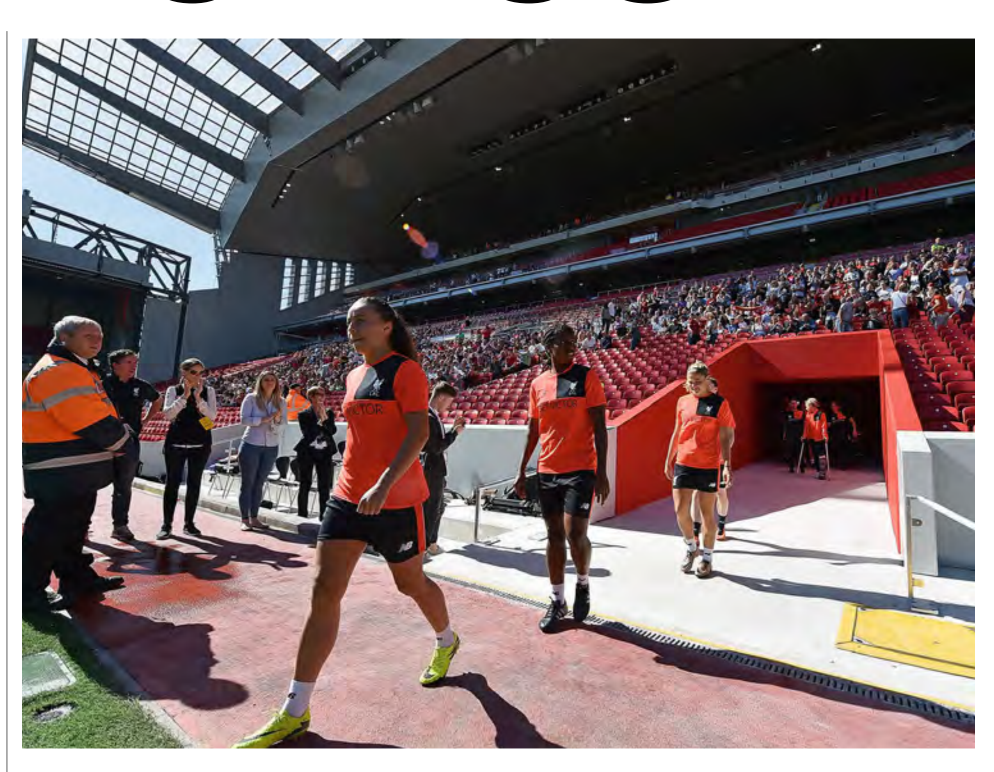
I can’t wait to see what will happen next year, especially now he has 12 months as a first-team manager in the WSL 1 under his belt.

"WE CAN DEFINITELY DO SOME DAMAGE NEXT SEASON"

Liverpool Ladies will be a force to be reckoned with once more, vows Brooklyn-born defender Satara Murray

Since returning from injury in May you've made the right-back spot your own...
What a lot of people didn't really know about me last year is that I would have never said I was a centre-half. I came in last year and was put into the position and so to some extent I guess the gauntlet was thrown down. Nobody really told me they had a plan for me to play at centre-back until I arrived in January of last year. It was an adjustment for sure but an adjustment that personally I don't think I was ready to take. I made a whole bunch of mistakes and that was largely because I wasn't used to playing in the position at all.

When I was in college for four years I played as a right-back and developed and established myself as a really good right-back. All credit to Scott for noticing that and allowing me to get back to the position that I'm more comfortable in. I really do enjoy playing there. I feel as though you can see all of the attributes that I can bring to the team when I am playing as a right-back.



Walking out behind team-mate Natasha Harding at Anfield

You have plenty of competition for a place in the team from Martha Harris...
Martha is a great player. It's really hard to compete against her because she is a really good right-back and was our player of the year in 2015. So when I was coming into the season this year, I knew exactly what I was up against and exactly what it was that I had to do in order to beat her out of that role.
I know we're on the same team but, as a player, at the end of the day it's about who gets that jersey and that spot in the team. She and I are always going to compete with hard work and it's about who can get the job done better, but I love competing against her.
I sometimes learn things from her and I believe that having that competition is really healthy for the team.

You have formed a good link-up down the right-hand side with Dutch international winger Shanice Van De Sanden...
Shanice is amazing! Everyone who watches us can see her speed – you know, she gets the ball and, bang, she's gone! I love having her in front of me. She listens and takes instructions really well and we work really well together.

When she first came in I was a little concerned because I was injured during pre-season so I hadn't played with her in a match situation and didn't know what to expect or how things were going to happen.
But since I've come in, we now have a little link-up going on. It's good playing with her and I really enjoy it.




On-pitch training at September's Main Stand test event

Manchester City have been crowned as the new FA Women's Super League champions but Liverpool are the only team to take league points off them so far (drawing both matches)...

First of all, congratulations to City for winning the league. The fact that we did take points off the league champions in both games is a good feeling, but at the end of the day each time we played them we had a game-plan and executed it really well. When we went to their ground and scored within the first 10 minutes I thought: this is really setting the tone. And that summed up the sort of team that Liverpool has been since the second half of the season regardless of who we may come up against. City, Arsenal, Chelsea...whoever it may be, we never ever back down from a challenge. As good as City are, we never felt threatened or scared in any shape, way or form. We know that every time we go into those games we are seen as the underdogs, so we kind of play with a chip on our shoulders and it's always fun to go out there and try and frustrate those teams.

The Ladies squad had the chance to train at Anfield ahead of the opening of the expanded Main Stand – how did you find that experience?

It was the coolest thing ever! I honestly couldn't believe it was happening. When we were training there I was looking up at the stand and thinking: oh my gosh, what is going on right now?! But honestly it was amazing. We got the chance to see what the men go through and to be there at such a historic place as Anfield, on such a historic pitch and show a few of our fans what the women can do was a wonderful experience.

Your mum Glenda came over from the USA for a few weeks this summer...

That was amazing because last year she didn't get to come at all so it was really awesome having her here. She's actually from England – she was born in London – so her coming here was a kind of a homecoming. She was here for three weeks and we got the chance to see a whole bunch of things and places that I hadn't even seen and I've been here for two years! She also got the chance to watch me play a couple of games as a pro so I was really excited about that. Our fans have songs for each player and she was singing along to mine. She was singing loud and proud – it was awesome!

You mention the fans – the Liverpool Ladies supporters are renowned for their vocal support...

The fans are amazing. Coming from North Carolina University in America, I was pretty used to the craziness of the fans but here it's like a whole new level. I really do love the support and I hope it continues to grow as more people come to realise that the women's side of the game is getting bigger and better.

How are you enjoying life in Liverpool?

This year I think I have enjoyed it so much more for a number of reasons. I love the team and I love the fact that I've had a much better season. The city itself is just amazing. I've lived in some pretty cool places in my short lifetime but Liverpool has to be one of the coolest cities that I've ever lived in. I hope I can continue living here for a couple more years yet – that would be great.

The squad seem to be a tight-knit group too...

This is like my second family and I would really sacrifice anything for my team-mates. We are really super-focused and everything that we do, we do together. We fight for each other on the pitch and the chemistry that we have off the pitch helps explain why we have been successful on it during the second half of the season. There are jokes going on in the changing-room all the time and there is never a dull moment. It's a lot of fun.

You wear the squad number 44 – is there any significance to that choice?

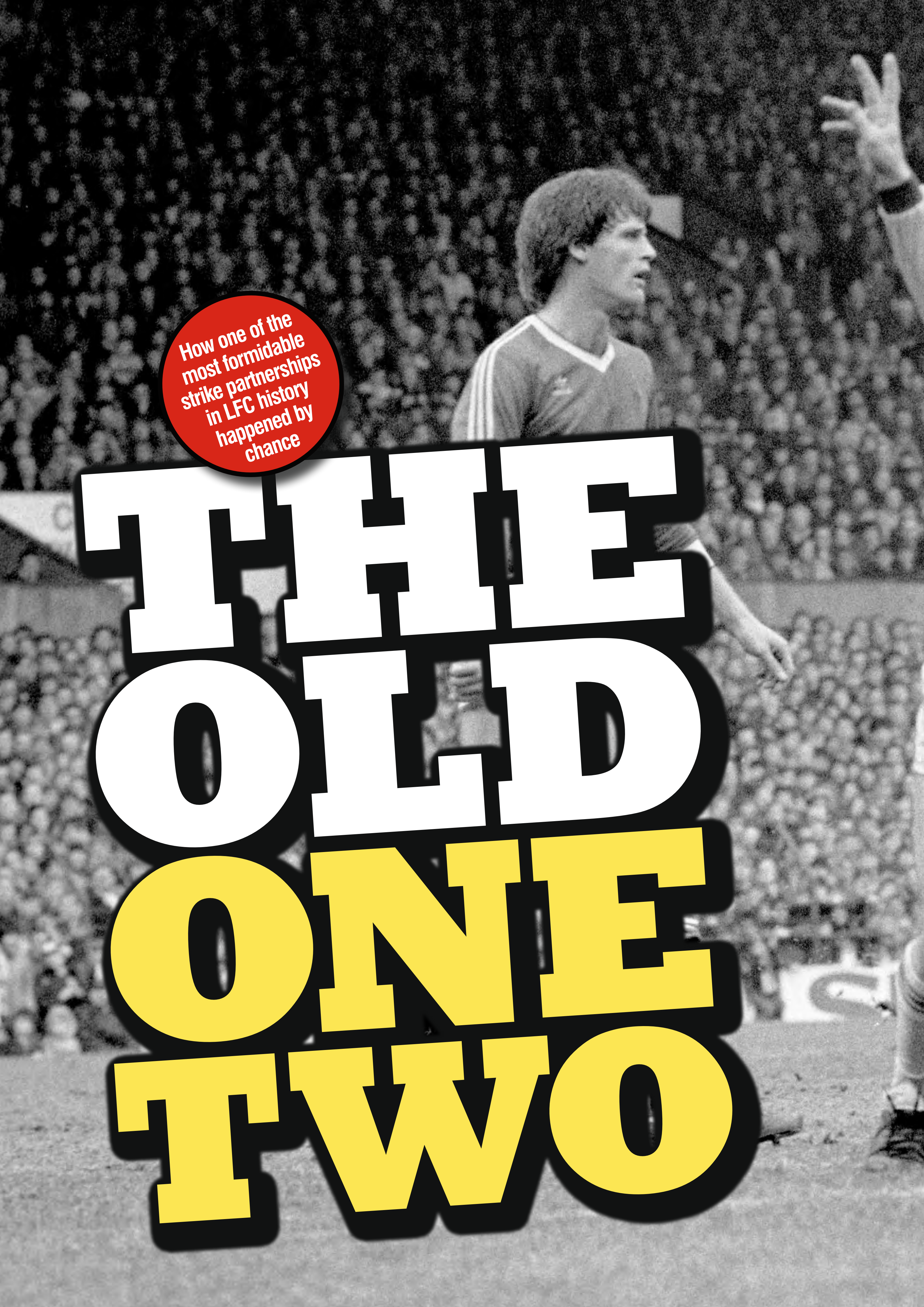
Actually that's been my number since I was 11 so I've had it for about 12 years now. At the time all my team-mates wanted the numbers of the great US women's national team stars such as Mia Hamm and Kristine Lilly but I didn't just want to be like them. I said: 'Mum what's your age?' and she said: 'I'm 44'. So I said: 'You know what, I'll just go with that' and since then I've stuck with it. It's my lucky number and I love it.

Your trademark headband has been missing for the last couple of games...

I changed my hairstyle altogether! I had my headband to keep my hair out of my face and now I've changed it, I don't really need the headband any more. But to be honest I really do miss the headband so it may make a comeback for the Arsenal game [on Sunday 6 November]. Who knows?!

Words: William Hughes


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THE OLD ONE TWO

How one of the most formidable strike partnerships in LFC history happened by chance



KENNY ON RUSHIE

From Dalglish: My Autobiography (1996):
'My partnership with Rush proved so good because he could run and I could pass. I would just try to put the ball in front of him. Rushie said that he made runs knowing the ball would come to him. That was true but only because his runs were so clever. His run was more important than my pass.

'Rushie was a good passer himself. He could have been a midfielder, could have played a bit deeper, because his range of passing was great. When we played small-sided matches at Melwood, his passing and vision were good; either foot, no problem. We used to call him 'Tosh', an ironic touch, because of his lack of ability in the air. Yet Rushie still bagged a few goals with his head.

'Rushie was easily the best partner I've ever had. We could have been made for each other. Every team that's been successful has had a strong tradition of partnerships. Our partnership was natural. By watching each other and talking we soon learned each other's traits. We complemented each other well.

'We had another role, which people don't often give Liverpool strikers credit for. Bob Paisley told us that we were his first line of defence when any Liverpool attack broke down. Rushie is one of the best strikers at closing defenders down. When the opposition got the ball, Rushie and I worked as hard as we could to keep them pegged back to allow our midfield and defence time to regroup'.

Thirty-five years ago, in November 1981, a Merseyside derby was beckoning. Red was hosting blue at Anfield, and Liverpool, deposed as champions by Aston Villa the previous season, were a ho-hum ninth in the table with Everton a couple of places behind.

Upfront for Liverpool: Kenny Dalglish, in his fifth season with the Reds and four months away from his 31st birthday; and Ian Rush, not yet turned 20 and making only his eleventh start ever for the team in the league.

Half-an-hour in and with the score goalless, Everton midfielder Steve McMahon made a crunching tackle on Ray Kennedy and the left-sided maestro had to leave the field.

On came substitute David Johnson (only one was allowed back then), back dropped Dalglish into a deeper-lying position…and so began one of the finest attacking partnerships in LFC history.

If the tactical switch proclaimed an arrival – that of a scorching new goalscorer in red – it also, arguably, heralded a revival – of the legend wearing no7. Going into the game Dalglish had not scored a league goal at Anfield for the first ten months of 1981 and had been agitating for Paisley to consider playing him in a less advanced role. Against the Toffees he netted twice, early in the second half, with Rush making it 3-0 on 75 minutes. Liverpool won 3-1.

With extra space afforded to him 'in the hole', Kenny pulled the strings, provided the ammo, and Rushie applied the finish. That season, 1981/82, the canny Scot scored 22 in all competitions while the Welsh whippet got 30 and the team won the title and the League Cup.

David Johnson, the sub who helped kick-start it, later recalled: "I think Rushie would be the first to admit that in training he looked like an ordinary player – he didn't have the explosive pace. But all of a sudden, as soon as he got in the first team, he caught fire. He gained three or four yards of pace, his touch was great. His record speaks for itself, what a great player to be replaced by. A class act."

With David Fairclough at the Main Stand's official opening



The following campaign the new pairing scored 51 between them (31 for Rush and 20 for Dalglish, and the same league-and-cup double), and in 1983/84 it rose to a phenomenal 59 (47 for Rush and 12 for Dalglish, and a treble of league, European Cup and League Cup). The *Daily Telegraph* has called the partnership 'the benchmark by which all others are judged around Anfield'.

In 1999 the duo were retrospectively voted the best strike-force that British football has ever seen, by Michael Owen and Alan Shearer, no less, in the BBC's *Match of the Day* magazine. Shearer said of Dalglish: "He would take the defender out of the game with a pass and put back-spin on the ball so it sat up, inviting the shot." Owen called Rush "a class striker, deadly around the box and with a scoring instinct." Kenny and Rushie beat Peter Beardsley and Gary Lineker (for England) into second place, with another Liverpool combo, Kevin Keegan and John Toshack, in third.

"IAN RUSH WAS THE PREDATOR SUPREME AND KENNY DALGLISH PINGED PASSES EVERYWHERE"

One man who remembers their partnership well is Liverpool author and broadcaster John Keith. He recently told the club's website: "It was the best strike force I have ever seen. They were brilliant because they were so different. Rushie was just incredible, the predator supreme. And what can you say about Kenny? People said he had ice in his head because in the heat of a match he'd be like a computer, pinging passes everywhere to open up the opposition.

"Bob Paisley used to say Kenny was the strongest player he had ever met. They were just sensational together. I have seen some great partnerships at international-level as well as club-level, but Dalglish and Rush are the best I have ever seen."

RUSHIE ON KENNY

From Rush: The Autobiography (2008):
'I would say that Kenny, more than any other Liverpool player, had been responsible for my success. We had developed an almost telepathic understanding. I would make a run, instinctively knowing that he would find me with an inch-perfect pass.

'A lot of people are under the impression that Kenny joined Liverpool at a young age, but he was coming up to 27 when he arrived at Anfield from Celtic in the summer of 1977. He had now been with the club for seven years [in 1984] and, although he had lost a bit of pace, his astute football brain and superb technique more than compensated for his advancing years. To my mind he was the most complete and all-round player I ever had the privilege of playing with – and that's saying something given the many fine players I knew over the years.

'The phrase 'genius' is often overused in football. Very few players are truly worthy of that epithet but, without doubt, Kenny was one. Doing easily what others find difficult is talent; doing what the talented find impossible is genius. Many times I saw Kenny perform something on a football pitch that I had thought impossible. He was everybody's ideal of the thinking footballer and a lot more besides. His inspired reading of play and sublime passing created many goals for me, but above all he encouraged me, and every player, to go out and enjoy ourselves and entertain supporters. I shall always be grateful to him for that'.





Suarez and Sturridge

The most fearsome Premier League partnership of recent times. In 2013/14, their first full season together, they shared 55 goals in all competitions. Luis Suarez scored 31 and became the sixth Liverpool player to win the PFA player of the year award. Daniel Sturridge's 24 included the team's first and last goals of the campaign. Grounds up and down the country quaked when the SAS and the Reds were in town.

DYNAMIC DUOS

The post-Rush-Dalglish strike-partnerships that thrilled Reds and struck fear into opposition hearts

Gerrard and Torres

Injury would eventually disrupt their partnership but for two scintillating seasons Steven Gerrard and Fernando Torres seemed unstoppable. The skipper moved higher up the pitch, revelling in a no10 role, to develop an intuitive rapport with the Spaniard. In 2007/08 they scored 54 between them in all comps. It fell to 34 the next season but the side finished second in the league and made waves in Europe.

Collymore and Fowler

Not quite peas from the same pod but they lit up Anfield and elsewhere for two memorable seasons. In 1995/96 local lad Robbie Fowler reached a career-high of 36 goals supported by Stan Collymore's haul of 19 (in his first season with Liverpool), and who can forget their strikes in the first 4-3 against Keegan's Newcastle United? In 1996/97 they scored another 47 goals between them.

Keegan and Toshack

If you're old enough to recall Granada TV's *Kick Off* show when Kevin Keegan and John Toshack were tested for telepathy, you'll recall how lethal these two were on the pitch in the 1970s. Toshack said: "I was a tall frontman, far less mobile than Kevin, and he never stopped running. Our understanding developed to a stage when I would flick balls on knowing where he was going. We did the simple things well."

Hunt and St John

The net-busters behind Liverpool's title triumph of 1963/64. England ace Roger Hunt finished the league campaign with 31. Scots terrier Ian St John got 21. The ever-modest Hunt has said: "Ian had a good football brain and we linked up well. In those days you had out-and-out wingers, too, so defences were opened up more frequently and it was probably easier to score more goals because of that."


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Didi Hamann

Great start but it's about grinding out results too

There is no doubt Liverpool have started the season in a hugely positive fashion, especially when you consider some of the difficult fixtures they've had. In particular they've been superb going forward, scoring four goals against both Arsenal and Leicester City and five in the Anfield win over Hull City.

That type of football is a pleasure to be involved with and obviously supporters revel in it. We'd love to see it every week. The reality is, though, that there will be games when you don't score freely or struggle. And on those occasions you simply need to find a way to win.

That's why the victory at Swansea City just before the international break was probably as impressive as some of those other results I've already mentioned. A goal down away from home at half-time, plenty needed to be done to turn the situation around. The fact they did that hopefully bodes well for the rest of the season.

At Chelsea it was a different type of game. Again, though, similar qualities were on display late on when the team were leading by just a single goal. They got the job done and ensured they came away with a hugely satisfying 2-1 win.

My point is that there will be days when you have to grind out the result or just get over the line despite playing well for the majority of the 90 minutes. And if you can do that regularly then you have a much, much greater chance of success. I don't think the ability to do that has been in the team enough over recent years; whereas other sides, mainly Manchester United under Alex Ferguson, used to display it regularly. They were able to somehow find the result they needed.

For Liverpool I definitely don't think making that happen is a case of becoming more defensive or including more defensive-minded players in the starting XI. Instead it might just be about the approach of the players at various times in games. Maybe now and again the manager will tell them to sit a bit deeper. From what I've seen, their main strength is attack. When everyone is performing there are few sides in the Premier League who can match their firepower; there are goals from all areas of the team.

"I'D ONLY THINK ABOUT TROPHIES AROUND MARCH, APRIL, MAY – BEFORE THEN IS A MISTAKE"

Our side back in 2000/01 was different. Our best asset was our strength at the back. Yes, we had Michael Owen in superb form supported by Emile Heskey and Robbie Fowler. But overall we simply didn't have the firepower of this current team. That was why we needed to keep clean-sheets in games such as Roma away, or Barcelona home and away. It was the key to our success; whereas Jürgen Klopp's team are better going the other way and that's why they might end up conceding a few goals or not keeping many clean-sheets. But if they are scoring plenty then that's not a huge problem.

Taking a decent haul of points during the early months of the season is obviously pleasing. But it guarantees absolutely nothing. Nobody should be getting carried away by it. The team have to keep going and then see where they are when March, April and May come around. Then, if things are still going well, was the only time I ever thought we might be contenders for a trophy or trophies. To think about it before then is a mistake.

Right now, though, there are good reasons to be optimistic. Aside from the goal-scoring abilities, something else that gives me confidence is the leaders in the side now. Clearly Klopp felt he needed more guys he could trust, guys who were happy to take responsibility. He's brought in quite a few of them, particularly Joel Matip and Ragnar Klavan.

Those are the the type of characters, along with James Milner and Jordan Henderson, that you need if you want to put yourself in contention for silverware.

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The 2-1 win at the Liberty Stadium was hard-fought



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U23s

Watch Liverpool FC U23s as they host the Merseyside derby.

Michael Beale's side welcome the Everton U23s to Prenton Park, as they focus on their next home game of the 2016/17 Premier League 2 season.

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Rejection. If you're pursuing a career in football you'll definitely encounter it at some stage. There'll be a club that lets you go or a manager who doesn't pick you.

How you deal with it can have a massive influence on how far you progress in the game. Ovie Ejaria is a good example of that. Released by Arsenal a few years ago, he joined Liverpool FC's Academy and has made significant progress since then to earn a first-team debut under Jürgen Klopp against Derby County in the League Cup last month.

I watch a lot of the Liverpool under-age sides and his development in the last 12 months has been amazing. A year ago he would probably admit that he wasn't finding it easy in the Under-18s. Now he's training with the first team after a fantastic pre-season where he stood out in games.

He was imposing himself and doing very well. Technically gifted, he's comfortable on the ball and has a good engine. Obviously he still has a long way to go, but it's great to see him on the right track and that the hard work of the Academy staff is paying off.

Ejaria's attitude must be good and that's a big thing. For a young boy to move from London to Liverpool and adjust to a new way of life can't have been easy. It's the type of challenge players typically have to go through. At those times the question is: how badly do you want to be a professional?

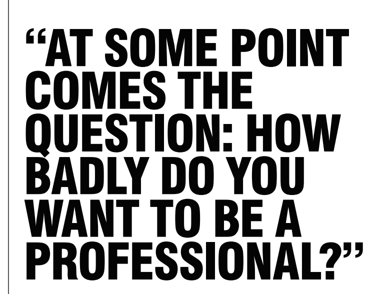
Ovie has shown how much by leaving an environment where he was comfortable and coming to the North West to try to fulfil his potential.


Ovie Ejaria and Under -23s team-mate Pedro Chirivella

He didn't sulk or spit his dummy out when Arsenal let him go. Instead he got on with it and now he's reaping the rewards. If he continues to show the same approach, work hard and avoid the inevitable distractions that come along, he can go far.

Ejaria's progression to this point is further proof that there is no exact way to producing players. Youngsters will all develop at different rates. Trent Alexander-Arnold is another who has made significant steps in the last year. He's calm on the ball and capable of playing in midfield or at full-back. He has real energy and gets forward regularly to offer a threat.

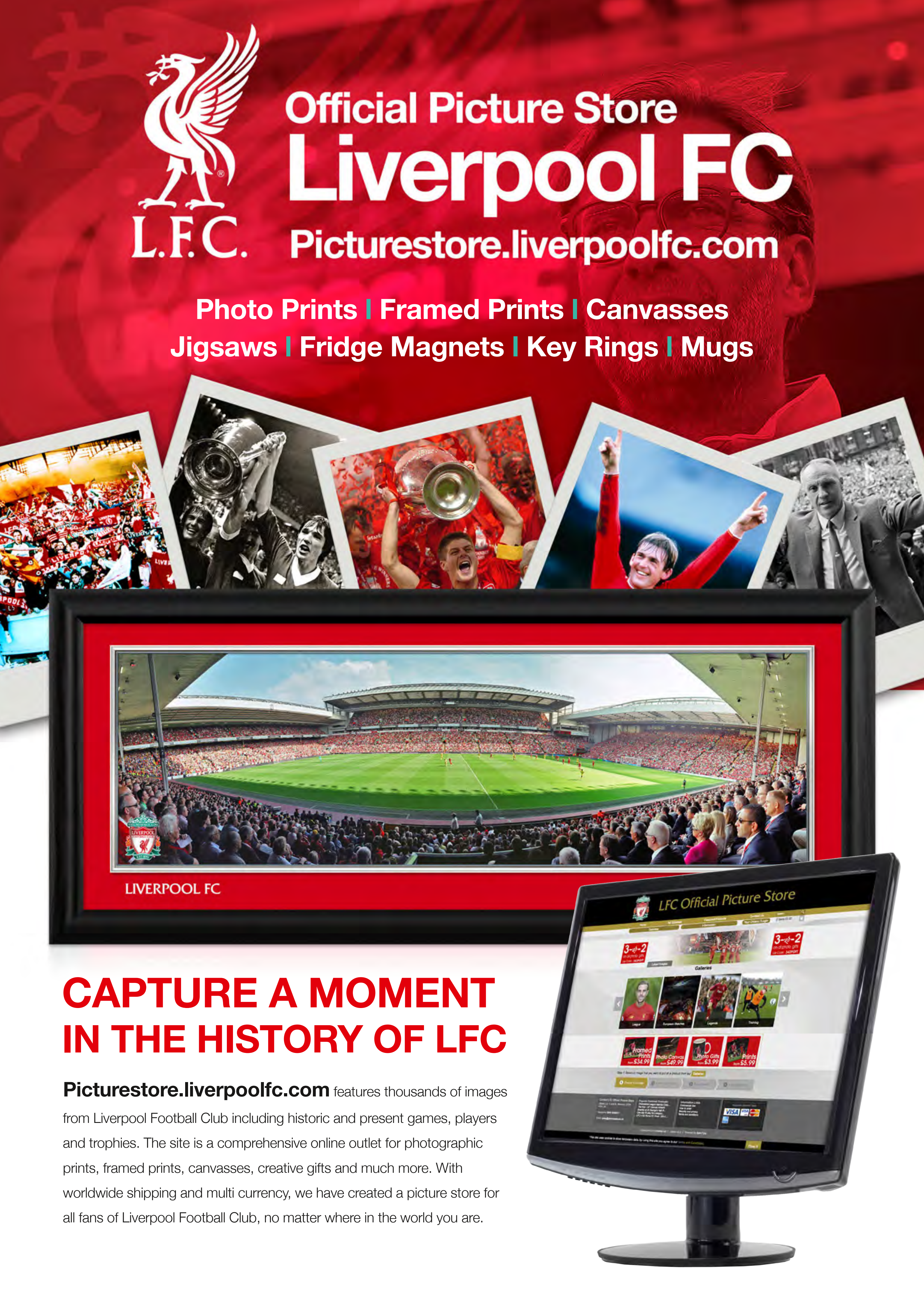
He's actually progressed so much that he is really challenging for the role of understudy to Nathaniel Clyne. The fact he's training at Melwood on a regular basis is a credit to him. The first-team staff also deserve praise as they have recognised he needs to be around that particular environment now to ensure he continues to grow and develop.



A big positive for me in the way Liverpool are working to bring through players right now is the U-23 set-up. In recent times there seemed to be a view that using senior players in the U-21 side wasn't necessary or didn't work. Thankfully that seems to have changed. Danny Ings has been playing, and scoring, regularly with the team. Mamadou Sakho and Kevin Stewart have also been involved.

For the teenage lads, training and playing with those guys is invaluable. It can help them to learn so much. Also, it makes the team stronger and helps them to win. And that's always a good habit for every footballer, no matter what age they are.

Follow Neil on Twitter
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CLUB

Behind the scenes on the new tour plus brand new shows on LFCTV

You'll find this beautiful illustration of the Liver Bird's historic cousin on the wall just outside the Main Stand's new boardroom – but what species is it? Answer on p98.

Image courtesy National Audubon Society

How it looked against Leicester on LFCTV…

ENTER THE GLADIATORS

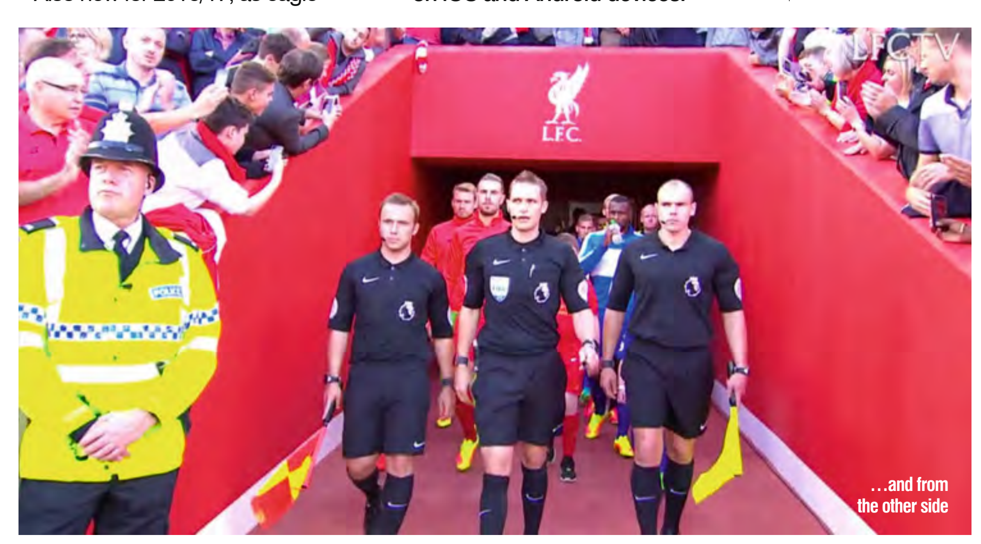
The world-famous sign is back in place – but walking out at Anfield is a whole new experience

It's one of the most famous signs in football – and it's back in place in the Anfield players' tunnel after the Main Stand expansion.

Reinstated four years ago and dating from the mid-1970s, the *This Is Anfield* sign was taken down temporarily in May this year as work on the redeveloped stand continued. It was subsequently placed back above the entrance to the pitch by 17-year-old Thomas Sefton, an apprentice joiner at Liverpool FC, the day before the first home fixture of the season against Leicester City.

Also new for 2016/17, as eagle-eyed supporters at Anfield may have noticed, are the white goal-nets – reverting from the red previously in use since August 2012. Manager Jürgen Klopp and his backroom team asked groundstaff to change them in order to make the nets more visible in the players' peripheral vision.

■ Keep in touch with all things Anfield via the all-new LFC Official App – now ready to download. It provides news, exclusive interviews, videos, live commentary, match highlights, photos, social-media buzz, stats and much more – free and available now on iOS and Android devices.



…and from the other side

THE HUNGER GAMES



There's a mouthwatering new addition to the menu at Anfield this season. It's a pie called Lamb Shanks and it won the recent Taste of Anfield competition – a nationwide search to mark the opening of Anfield's redeveloped Main Stand. Reds fan Stephen Williams is its creator: his entry was unanimously chosen by a panel including Anfield's executive head chef, LFC's general manager of hospitality, tourism and events, and Clayton Park Bakery. Until now, Anfield's most popular bake has been the Steak Pie, with an average of 1,300 sold each home game. Last season saw over 87,000 pies consumed at Anfield, while the club's famous Scouse Pie took Soccer AM's 'Top Pie' in 2010.

#MAIN STAND #LFC #TOUR #AWESOME

Take selfies galore and hear tales you've never heard before on the club's Preview Stadium Tour



Been on the Preview Stadium Tour yet? It goes behind the scenes in some of the new areas of the expanded Main Stand at Anfield and, without giving too much away, we can report that it's totally boss!

Visitors will discover how the club has put its history, heritage and fans at the heart of the momentous Main Stand project. They'll also experience some of the best views from the new Directors Box and have the chance to sit for a selfie in Jürgen Klopp's dugout seat. Also included is entry into The Liverpool FC Story, the club's interactive museum, and its latest exhibition, The Steven Gerrard Collection.

On this particular occasion John and Denise are our tour-guides and, as well as the club magazine, they welcome guests from as far afield as Australia, Thailand, Mexico, Denmark and Ireland, plus of course plenty of local Reds.

We gather at the LFC Museum & Stadium Tour Reception under the Spion Kop, then proceed to the Bill Shankly statue for a warm welcome and introduction. Our group is escorted up the steps of the Main Stand's exterior concourse and into its impressive entrance. A short escalator-ride takes us to the boardroom, past priceless club artefacts on the walls and works of art reflecting the city's maritime heritage, and out to the 'posh seats' in the directors' box with the most incredible views of the pitch, the other stands and parts of the Liverpool skyline.

"SPELLBINDING STORIES WILL ENLIGHTEN EVEN THE MOST FANATICAL OF REDS"

All along John regales us with spellbinding tales and fascinating stats, many of which will enlighten even the most fanatical of Reds. Why were construction partners Carillon astonished by the original Main Stand? What can guests expect from the dozen new executive boxes here? How did Shanks give us the edge in the old dressing-rooms? All will be revealed.

Back inside the stadium we pause for a while in rows of wooden red seats preserved from the old Main Stand and dating from 1906. On the wall behind us is incribed in large letters the legend 'ROWS AND ROWS OF CRIMSON FLAGS'. Meaning what? You'll find out on this tour.



Down to pitchside and a once-in-a-lifetime chance to get close to the hallowed turf (and learn what it's made from and how often it's mown) and the new dugouts. Then it's over to the Spion Kop for a spine-tingling recording of pre-kick-off *You'll Never Walk Alone* and more of John's wonderful stories. How many were really on the Kop when we played Inter Milan and St Etienne? What happened beneath the terrace when Dejan Lovren's winner went in against Dortmund? That'd be telling.

We conclude with a visit to The Liverpool FC Story – everything from Stevie's Istanbul shirt and medal, to Billy Liddell's toe-capped boots from back-in-the-day, to those five gleaming, glittering, gorgeous European Cups. And we complete the day with a trip to the Boot Room Sports Cafe where The Steven Gerrard Collection continues and the food is first-class.

It's all there, waiting to be experienced. Visit liverpoolfc.com/tours and make it happen.

"YOU'LL SEE EVERYTHING FROM STEVIE'S ISTANBUL SHIRT TO BILLY'S TOE-CAPPED BOOTS"




MATTEO
21
ALONSO
14
HYYPIA
4
OWEN
11
PREMIER
DAVID BECKHAM
MICHAEL OWEN
BERGKAMP
10
DEL PIERO
10
GUARDIOLA
4
KLUIVERT
9
SUÁR
The Final 2005
Istanbul
Carlsberg
Supporters
ACROSS THE WORLD...
By the mid 1920's Liverpool FC had clocked up four First Division titles and an FA Cup final appearance. They were attracting noisy crowds of 40,000 and the Spion Kop was getting a name as a hotbed of loyal support and for an unrivalled communal singing voice.
The Reds were travelling far and wide on pre-season tours, whilst attracting some of the best footballers on the market. The new kids on the block were making waves and the regular Merseyside derbies between the Reds and Blues was developing into one of the classic sporting rivalries.
ROCKING TO THE MERSEY BEAT
But this was just the start. Liverpool FC was about to become one of the most successful football clubs of all time during a decade when the whole world was looking towards Liverpool.
As the 1960's dawned Bill Shankly had just arrived as manager and four Liverpool lads who would go on to shake the world, changed their name to the Beatles.
The team and the city was now rocking to 'The Mersey Beat' and when Gerry Marsden and his Pacemakers revived an old Rodgers & Hammerstein show tune called 'You'll Never Walk Alone' for their next single, the Anfield crowd sang along to it every week as Anfield became a fortress and Bill Shankly taught the players to reach for the stars...
In the 1970's and 80's as Bob Paisley collected a glittering array of honours, including three European Cups, while the Club's fan-base expanded across the world.
THIS
Jürgen Klopp
2015-present

Be the first to catch a sneak preview.

This is your chance to see some of the new areas of the expanded Main Stand.

- Sit in Klopp's pitch side seat in the new Manager's Dugout
- Enjoy some of the best views of inside the stadium from the new Executive Boxes
- Includes entry to The Liverpool FC Story museum and The Steven Gerrard Collection exhibition

Please note this tour does not include the new player's dressing rooms, new press rooms or new tunnel and is subject to change at short notice due to the continuing construction work. The full Stadium Tour opens in Spring 2017.









Don't miss out!
Book now at **liverpoolfc.com/Tour**
or call **0151 260 6677**

TOP OF THE CLASS

New Young Fan Ticket Initiative is proving a real hit for junior Reds

Over 1,000 free tickets will be made available to local schoolchildren across this Premier League season – and an 'official matchday reveal' was recently held at Anfield as part of Liverpool FC's Young Fan Ticket Initiative Scheme.

Twenty-five local schools attended the cup-style draw along with Reds players Alberto Moreno and Mamadou Sakho and club mascot Mighty Red. Each school was presented with a commemorative certificate detailing their matchday allocation for 2016/17, and five were selected to attend the game against Leicester City: New Park Primary, Four Oaks Primary, All Saints Catholic Primary, Pinehurst Primary, and Alsop High School.

Teresa Cunningham, the deputy head of Four Oaks, said afterwards: "The children had a fabulous time at Anfield and we were obviously delighted with the score too. This is a brilliant initiative for our local schools." Louis Smith, a Year 8 student from Alsop, added: "The atmosphere at Anfield was unbelievable. It was great to hear all the fans cheering our team on, and it meant a lot to represent such an amazing school. The Main Stand is unbelievable and I would love to be able to experience it all over again."

Foodbanks & cycle hubs

Fans Supporting Foodbanks is back for a second season. Conceived by local Liverpool and Everton supporters groups, the initiative sees a mobile foodbank collection bank hosted at Anfield (Centenary Stand car-park) and Goodison on matchdays. LFC kindly asks fans to donate the following: tinned vegetable; rice; fruit juice; coffee; curry and pasta sauce; sugar; custard; cup-a-soups; noodles; jam. All donations will be equally split between two North Liverpool foodbanks: St Andrews Community Network and Anfield Breckside Community Council. Keep in touch by following @LFC on Twitter using the hashtag #HDWCC.

Also back this season is the LFC Cycle Hub, allowing fans who cycle to the stadium to park their bike securely with an attendant at Stanley Park car-park on Priory Road. They also receive a loyalty card which is stamped at each game; every supporter who receives two stamps is entered into a prize draw to win LFC cycling goodies. After five stamps they are also entered into a draw to win a signed shirt.

Andrew Parkinson, operations director at the club, says: "This popular service makes it easier for fans to travel to Anfield on a matchday and offers alternative transport options."



DAYS OF OUR LIVES

Look out for a fantastic new series launched on the club's official channel LFCTV this month





After football, what comes next? It's the question every professional faces at the end of their playing career. This autumn LFCTV finds out what became of recent ex-Reds players, and it makes for compulsive viewing.

Entitled *Added Time*, the brand new show sees LFCTV's production team travel across the Continent exploring life after Liverpool. From Zagreb and Barcelona via Norway and back to Merseyside, the first series discovers that some former players have taken on exciting new challenges within football, while others now get their kicks from vocations as diverse as motor-racing and salmon-fishing!

Stig Inge Bjornebye, a Liverpool left-back in the 1990s and regular for the Norwegian national side, appears first. Today he's back at former club Rosenborg BK as its sports director: "I work closely with the CEO of the club and the head coach," he explains to LFCTV. "It's a people's club and an institution in Norwegian sport, participating in the Champions League for many years in the Nineties. At the

moment we're trying to build back up to the European standard."

When asked for one word to describe his time at Liverpool he says: "Emotional. It's emotional for me. It's emotional for everyone who's been there. [But] I think it's important, with a decent playing career, that you don't cling to it too much. Make sure that you look forward; take your learning, develop it, give it to someone else."

Next up in this must-see series: former Reds midfielder Igor Biscan, now coaching back in Croatia, his five years at Anfield culminating in a Champions League winner's medal in 2005. "I have lots of beautiful memories from that time. It wasn't always positives…but I always tried to give my best and I always respected those fans. And I feel proud that I was part of it. I wouldn't change one day… I learned a lot in Liverpool and I'm trying to bring those lessons here: how to behave, to train, to communicate, and how to respect everybody."

Back in Norway the LFCTV team tracks down Vegard Heggem, who now runs a salmon-fishing lodge on his childhood farm. Talk about idyllic, but it's the least the likeable former full-back deserves after an Anfield career blighted by injury. "I think that rather



than being bitter about the games I didn't get, I appreciate those I got to play. I had some great experiences. I scored in front of the Kop – what more can you really wish for?

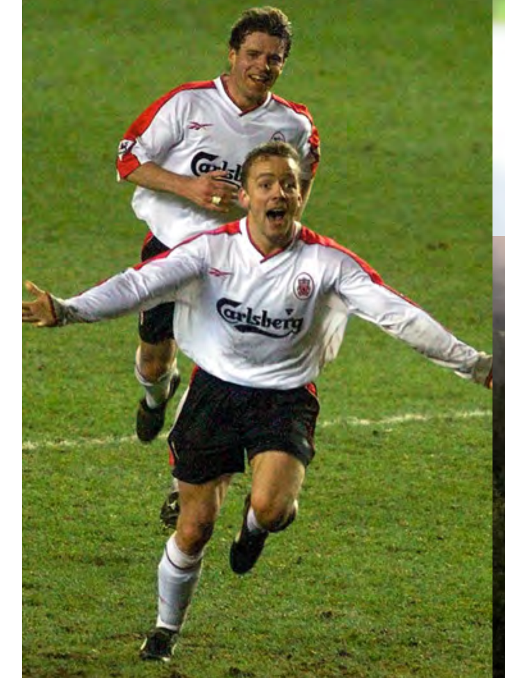
"I had five absolutely wonderful years at the club as a player; also just living in Liverpool with the people there. When I go there now as a supporter sometimes I have to pinch myself just to think I've been a part of this as a player. It's something that you take with you for the rest of your life."

For the fourth episode it's Jerzy Dudek in the LFCTV spotlight. The big Pole in our goal is now a racing driver and says: "To compare playing in goal and driving the car, it's almost the same. You are alone [and] you have to make quick decisions… When you go out of your goal and you miss the ball, it's a goal. When you make a bad decision on the track, you're off the track, or you crash into someone else and you're both off the track.



VEGARD HEGGEM





"It's all about decisions, focus, concentration and a little bit also, I have to say, madness!"

The final episode finds LFCTV in the company of Sean Highdale, former captain of Liverpool's Under-18s and a member of the victorious FA Youth Cup squad of 2007. Now with his own property business and still an Anfield season-ticket holder, Sean talks candidly about the devastating car-crash that ended his hopes of a top-flight playing career – and also about representing Great Britain in Rio's recent Paralympic Games. It's an inspiring way to end the first series, and not to be missed.

Benefiting from unprecedented access, *Added Time* paints an intimate portrait of post-football life as well as celebrating the enduring impact that playing for Liverpool FC has had. A new episode will be shown on LFCTV each Monday evening for five weeks from 17 October, with episodes simultaneously released via the official Liverpool website on LFCTVGO.

Visit liverpoolfc.com/watch for details.



JERZY DUDEK

SEAN HIGHDALE

Those dates on LFCTV

Monday 17 October 2016 Episode 1 Stig Inge Bjornebye: find out how LFC's first Norwegian player is getting on as director of football at Norway's biggest club.

Monday 24 October 2016 Episode 2 Igor Biscan: up close and personal with the cult-hero of the Noughties now taking his first steps in football management.

Monday 31 October 2016 Episode 3 Vegard Heggem: we travel to rural Norway to find former full-back Vegard running an exclusive salmon-fishing lodge.

Monday 7 November 2016 Episode 4 Jerzy Dudek: our new series continues with Istanbul hero Jerzy now hoping to make the grade as a racing driver.

Monday 14 November 2016 Episode 5 Sean Highdale: footballer, Paralympian, businessman; how Liverpool FC Academy starlet Sean bounced back from tragedy.

ADDED TIME

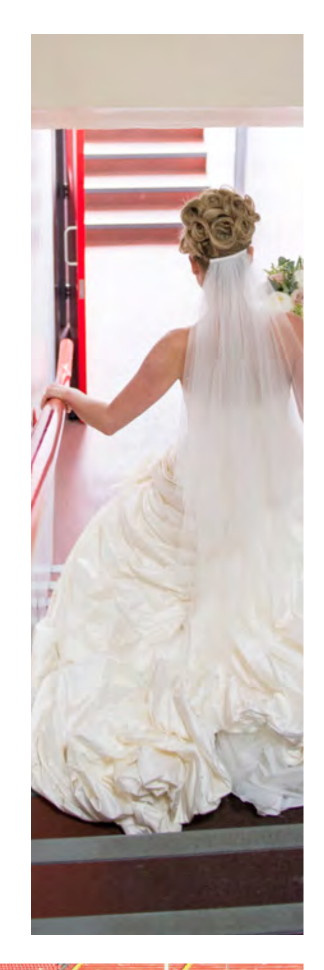
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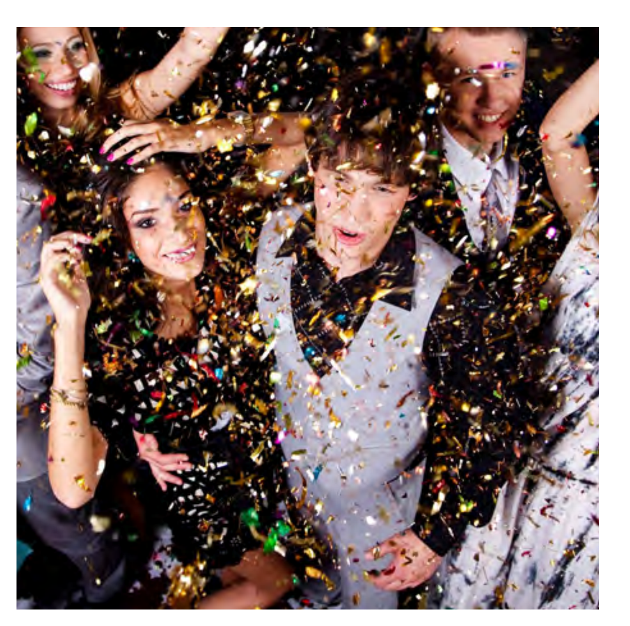
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COME TOGETHER

Liverpool FC Foundation brings together half-a-dozen local schools at multi-faith event

Liverpool Football Club recently hosted a special multi-faith event bringing together local schools from across the city. The event, held at the Academy in Kirkby, was also supported by The Merseyside Council of Faiths and The Liverpool Community Spirit.

More than 80 children from years five and six took part in the day-event from eight local primary schools: All Saints, Anfield, King David, New Park, Kingsley, Kensington, St Francis de Sales and St Silas.

Themed 'Respect One Another, Football, Friendship and Faith', the event was designed to promote community cohesion and to highlight the dignity, equality, diversity and individuality of every child. All participants took part in a range of fun activities including friendly football matches and games.

Dr Matthew Thompson, head of The Liverpool Community Spirit and member of The Merseyside Council of Faiths, said: "We would like to thank LFC Foundation staff for organising such a worthwhile event. It was a great pleasure to see young people from our city's diverse communities united in a spirit of fun, fair play and genuine respect. This is so valuable for promoting inclusive community spirit."

Andrea Cooper, head of the Foundation, added: "We are delighted that this pilot event was a big success and so well-received. This is all about bringing young people and communities together in a fun and engaging way."

Above: happy participants from the six local schools

GIVING IT BACK

First-teamers Lovren and Grujic attend Respect 4 All event

LFC duo Marko Grujic and Dejan Lovren visited Anfield Sports Community Centre to show their support for the Liverpool FC Foundation's Respect 4 All programme. The Reds pair attended the event to join in a coaching session before presenting participants with signed LFC scarves. The Foundation has two Respect 4 All centres, in Anfield and Wirral, which deliver free impairment-specific coaching to young people and adults with complex additional needs.



Dejan and Marko with young people at the Respect 4 All event

Lovren was delighted to attend the Anfield event. "It is an absolute privilege to come down to the coaching session and participate with those involved," he said. "To be able to give something back to the community is extremely important and it is an honour that we are in a position to be involved with Foundation events like this."

Respect 4 All project-lead Ryan Moignard added: "This is a brilliant programme which gives those who previously haven't been involved in sport an opportunity to participate. I am thrilled that we have been able to get two of the first-team players down to today's event as the participants were absolutely delighted to see Dejan and Marko."

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KLOPP



SHOP

Celebrate Jürgen's first year in charge of the Mighty Reds with these official Liverpool FC essentials



QUIZ ANSWERS: LIVERPOOL p9: Paisley Square is the other new area next to the expanded Main Stand along with 96 Avenue; **FOOTBALL p23:** Jordan Henderson had completed 589 passes this season up to and including 1 October – 85 ahead of second-placed Santi Cazorla (Arsenal); **CLUB p79:** It's a double-crested cormorant as painted by the American naturalist John James Audubon, who sailed from New Orleans to Liverpool in 1826 seeking publishers for his monumental work *Birds of America* – now one of the most valuable books in the world!

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